
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
VELUT ARBOR AEVO

THE MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT SIMON.

SECOND SERIES.



THE MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT SIMON

ON THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV. AND THE REGENCY.

ABRIDGED FROM THE FRENCH.

BY

BAYLE ST. JOHN.

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MEMOIRS OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT-SIMON.

CHAPTER I.

State of the Court at death of Monseigneur—Conduct of the Dauphin and the Dauphine—The Duchesse de Berry—My interview with the Dauphin—He is reconciled with M. d'Orleans.

The death of Monseigneur, as we have seen, made a great change in the aspect of the Court and in the relative positions of its members. But the two persons to whom I must chiefly direct attention are the Duchesse de Bourgogne and the Duchesse de Berry. The former, on account of her husband's fall in the opinion of his father, had long been out of favour likewise. Although Monseigneur had begun to treat her less well for a long time, and most harshly during the campaign of Lille, and above all after the expulsion of the Duc de Vendôme from Mailly and Meudon; yet after the marriage of the Duc de Berry his coldness had still further increased. The adroit princess, it is true, had rowed against the current with a steadiness

and grace capable of disarming even a well founded resentment; but the persons who surrounded him looked upon the melting of the ice as dangerous for their projects. The Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne were every day still further removed in comparative disgrace.

Things even went so far, that apropos of an engagement broken off, the Duchesse resolved to exert her power instead of her persuasion and threatened the two Lislebonnes. A sort of reconciliation was then patched up, but it was neither sincere nor apparently so.

The cabal which laboured to destroy the Duc and Duchesse de Bourgogne was equally assiduous in augmenting the influence of the Duc de Berry, whose wife had at once been admitted without having asked into the sanctuary of the Parvulo. The object was to disunite the two brothers and excite jealousy between them. In this they did not succeed even in the slightest degree. But they found a formidable ally in the Duchesse de Berry, who proved as full of wickedness and ambition as any among them. The Duc d'Orleans often called his Duchesse, Madame Lucifer, at which she used to smile with complacency. He was right, for she would have been a prodigy of pride had she not had a daughter who far surpassed her. This is not yet the time to paint their portraits; but I must give a word or two of explanation on the Duchesse de Berry.

That princess was a marvel of wit, of pride, of ingratitude and folly — nay, of debauchery and

obstinacy. Scarcely had she been married a week when she began to exhibit herself in all these lights,—not too manifestly it is true, for one of the qualities of which she was most vain was her falsity and power of concealment, but sufficient to make an impression on those around her. People soon perceived how annoyed she was to be the daughter of an illegitimate mother and to have lived under her restraint however mild; how she despised the weakness of her father, the Duc d'Orleans, and how confident she was of her influence over him; and how she hated all who had interfered in her marriage—merely because she could not bear to be under obligations to any one—a reason she was absurd enough publicly to avow and boast of. Her conduct was now based on those motives. This is an example of how in this world people work with their heads in a sack, and how human prudence and wisdom are sometimes confounded by successes which have been reasonably desired and which turn out to be detestable! We had brought about this marriage to avoid a marriage with Mademoiselle de Bourbon and to cement the union of the two brothers. We now discovered that there was little danger of Mademoiselle de Bourbon, and then instead of her we had a Fury who had no thought but how to ruin those who had established her, to injure her benefactors, to make her husband and her brother quarrel, and to put herself in the power of her enemies because they were the enemies of her natural friends. It never occurred to her that the cabal would not be likely to abandon to her the fruit of so much labour and so many crimes.

It may easily be imagined that she was neither gentle nor docile when Madame la Duchesse began to give her advice. Certain that her father would support her she played the stranger and the daughter of France with her mother. Estrangement soon came on. She behaved differently in form, but in effect the same with the Duchesse de Bourgogne, who wished to guide her as a daughter, but who soon gave up the attempt. The Duchesse de Berry's object could only be gained by bringing about disunion between the two brothers, and for this purpose she employed as a spring the passion of her husband for herself.

The first night at Versailles after the death of Monseigneur was sleepless. The Dauphin and Dauphine heard mass early next morning. I went to see them. Few persons were present on account of the hour. The Princesse wished to be at Marly at the King's waking. Their eyes were wonderfully dry, but carefully managed; and it was easy to see they were more occupied with their new position than with the death of Monseigneur. A smile which they exchanged as they spoke in whispers convinced me of this. One of their first cares was to endeavour to increase their good relations with the Duc and Duchesse de Berry. They were to see them before they were up. The Duc de Berry showed himself very sensible to this act, and the Duchesse was eloquent, clever, and full of tears. But her heart was wrung by these advances of pure generosity. The separation she had planned soon followed: and the two princesses felt relieved at no longer being obliged to dine together.

Thus never was change greater or more marked than that brought about by the death of Monseigneur. That prince had become the centre of all hope and of all fear, a formidable cabal had seized upon him, yet without awakening the jealousy of the king, before whom all trembled, but whose anxieties did not extend beyond his own lifetime, during which and very reasonably, he feared nothing.

Before I go any further let me note a circumstance characteristic of the King. Madame la Dauphine went every day to Marly to see him. On the day after the death of Monseigneur she received, not without surprise, easily understood, a hint from Madame de Maintenon. It was to the effect that she should dress herself with some little care, inasmuch as the negligence of her attire displeased the King! The princess did not think that dress ought to occupy her then; and even if she had thought so, she would have believed, and with good reason, that she was committing a grave fault against decorum, a fault which would have been less readily pardoned, since in every way she had gained too much by what had just occurred not to be very guarded in her behaviour. On the next day she took more pains with her toilette; but what she did not being found sufficient, the day following she carried with her some things and dressed herself secretly in Madame de Maintenon's rooms; and resumed there her ordinary apparel before returning to Versailles. Thus she avoided offence both to the King and to society. The latter certainly would with difficulty have been persuaded that in this ill-timed

adornment of her person, her own tastes went for nothing. The Comtesse de Mailly, who invented the scheme, and Madame de Nogaret, who both liked Monseigneur, related this to me and were piqued by it. From this fact and from the circumstance that all the ordinary pleasures and occupations were resumed immediately after the death of Monseigneur, the King passing his days without any constraint,—it may be assumed that if the royal grief was bitter its evidences were of a kind to promise that it would not be of long duration.

M. le Dauphin, for, as I have said, it is by that title I shall now name Monseigneur le Duc de Bourgogne—M. le Dauphin, I say, soon gained all hearts. In the first days of solitude following upon the death of Monseigneur, the King intimated to M. de Beauvilliers that he should not care to see the new Dauphin go very often to Meudon. This was enough. M. le Dauphin at once declared that he would never set his foot in that palace, and that he would never quit the King. He was as good as his word, and not one single visit did he ever afterwards pay to Meudon. The King wished to give him fifty thousand livres a month, Monseigneur having had that sum. M. le Dauphin would not accept them. He had only six thousand livres per month. He was satisfied with double that amount and would not receive more. This disinterestedness much pleased the public. M. le Dauphin wished for nothing special on his account, and persisted in remaining in nearly everything as he was during the life of Monseigneur. These auguries

of a prudent and measured reign, suggested the brightest of hopes.

Aided by his adroit spouse, who already had full possession of the King's heart and of that of Madame de Maintenon, M. le Dauphin redoubled his attentions in order to possess them also. These attentions, addressed to Madame de Maintenon, produced their fruit. She was transported with pleasure at finding a Dauphin upon whom she could rely, instead of one whom she did not like, gave herself up to him accordingly, and by that means secured to him the King's favour. The first fortnight made evident to everybody at Marly the extraordinary change that had come over the King with respect to the Dauphin. His Majesty, generally severe beyond measure with his legitimate children, showed the most marked graciousness for this prince. The effect of this, and of the change that had taken place in his state, were soon most clearly visible in the Dauphin. Instead of being timid and retiring, diffident in speech, and more fond of his study than of the Salon, he became on a sudden easy and frank, showing himself in public on all occasions, conversing right and left in a gay, agreeable, and dignified manner; presiding, in fact, over the Salon of Marly, and over the groups gathered round him, like the divinity of a temple, who receives with goodness the homage to which he is accustomed, and recompenses the mortals who offer it with gentle regard.

In a short time hunting became a less usual topic of conversation. History, and even science, were touched

upon lightly, pleasantly, and discreetly, in a manner that charmed while it instructed. The Dauphin spoke with an elegant freedom that opened all eyes, ears, and hearts. People sometimes, in gathering near him, were less anxious to make their court than to listen to his natural eloquence, and to draw from it delicious instruction. It is astonishing with what rapidity he gained universal esteem and admiration. The public joy could not keep silent. People asked each other if this was really the same man they had known as the Duc de Bourgogne, whether he was a vision or a reality? One of M. le Dauphin's friends, to whom this question was addressed, gave a keen reply. He answered, that the cause of all this surprise was, that previously the people did not, and would not, know this prince, who, nevertheless, to those who had known him, was the same now as he had ever been; and that this justice would be rendered to him when time had shown how much it was deserved.

From the Court to Paris, and from Paris to the provinces, the reputation of the Dauphin flew on rapid wings. However founded might be this prodigious success, we need not believe it was entirely due to the marvellous qualities of the young prince. It was in a great measure a reaction against the hostile feeling towards him which had been excited by the cabal, whose efforts I have previously spoken of. Now that people saw how unjust was this feeling, their astonishment added to their admiration. Everybody was filled with a sentiment of joy at seeing the first dawn of a new state of things, which promised so much order and

happiness after such a long confusion and so much obscurity.

Gracious as the King showed himself to M. le Dauphin, and accustomed as the people grew to his graciousness, all the Court was strangely surprised at a fresh mark of favour that was bestowed one morning by his Majesty on this virtuous prince. The King, after having been closeted alone with him for some time, ordered his ministers to work with the Dauphin whenever sent for, and, whether sent for or not, to make him acquainted with all public affairs; this command being given once for all.

It is not easy to describe the prodigious movement caused at the Court by this order, so directly opposed to the tastes, to the disposition, to the maxims, to the usage of the King, who thus showed a confidence in the Dauphin which was nothing less than tacitly transferring to him a large part of the disposition of public affairs. This was a thunderbolt for the ministers,—who, accustomed to have almost everything their own way, to rule over everybody and browbeat everybody at will, to govern the state abroad and at home, in fact,—fixing all punishments, all recompenses, and always sheltering themselves behind the royal authority—"the King wills it so" being the phrase ever on their lips,—to these officers, I say, it was a thunderbolt which so bewildered them, that they could not hide their astonishment or their confusion. The public joy at an order which reduced these ministers, or rather these kings, to the condition of subjects, which put a curb upon their power, and pro-

vided against the abuses they committed, was great indeed! The ministers were compelled to bend their necks, though stiff as iron, to the yoke. They all went, with a hang-dog look, to show the Dauphin a feigned joy and a forced obedience to the order they had received.

Here, perhaps, I may as well speak of the situation in which I soon afterwards found myself with the Dauphin, the confidence as to the present and the future that I enjoyed with him, and the many deliberations we had upon public affairs. The matter is curious and interesting, and need no longer be deferred.

The Court being changed by the death of Monseigneur, I soon began indeed to think of changing my conduct with regard to the new Dauphin. M. de Beauvilliers spoke to me about this matter first, but he judged, and I shared his opinion, that slandered as I had been on previous occasions, and remaining still, as it were, half in disgrace, I must approach the Dauphin only by slow degrees, and not endeavour to shelter myself under him until his authority with the King had become strong enough to afford me a safe asylum. I believed, nevertheless, that it would be well to sound him immediately; and one evening, when he was but thinly accompanied, I joined him in the gardens at Marly, and profited by his gracious welcome to say to him, on the sly, that many reasons, of which he was not ignorant, had necessarily kept me until then removed from him, but that now I hoped to be able to follow with less constraint my attachment and my inclination, and that I flattered

myself this would be agreeable to him, He replied in a low tone, that there were sometimes reasons which fettered people, but in our case such no longer existed; that he knew of my regard for him, and reckoned with pleasure that we should soon see each other more frequently than before. I am writing the exact words of his reply, on account of the singular politeness of the concluding ones. I regarded that reply as the successful result of a bait that had been taken as I wished. Little by little I became more assiduous at his promenades, but without following them when the crowd or any dangerous people did so; and I spoke more freely. I remained content with seeing the Dauphin in public, and I approached him in the Salon only when I saw a good opportunity.

Some days after, being in the Salon, I saw the Dauphin and the Dauphine enter together and converse. I approached and heard their last words; they stimulated me to ask the prince what was in debate, not in a straightforward manner, but in a sort of respectful insinuating way which I already adopted. He explained to me that he was going to St. Germain to pay an ordinary visit; that on this occasion there would be some change in the ceremonial; explained the matter, and enlarged with eagerness on the necessity of not abandoning legitimate rights.

"How glad I am to see you think thus," I replied, "and how well you act in advocating these forms, the neglect of which tarnishes everything."

He responded with warmth; and I seized the moment to say, that if he, whose rank was so great

and so decided, was right to pay attention to these things, how much we dukes had reason to complain of our losses, and to try to sustain ourselves! Thereupon he entered into the question so far as to become the advocate of our cause, and finished by saying that he regarded our restoration as an act of justice important to the state; that he knew I was well instructed in these things, and that I should give him pleasure by talking of them some day.* He rejoined at that moment the Dauphine, and they set off for St. Germain.

A few days after this the Dauphin sent for me. I entered by the wardrobe, where a sure and trusty valet was in waiting; he conducted me to a cabinet in which the Dauphin was sitting alone. Our conversation at once commenced. For a full hour we talked upon the state of affairs, the Dauphin listening with much attention to all I said, and expressing himself with infinite modesty, sense, and judgment. His views, I found, were almost entirely in harmony with mine. He was sorry, and touchingly said so, for the ignorance of all things in which the King was kept by his minister; he was anxious to see the power of those ministers restricted; he looked with dislike upon the incredible elevation of the illegitimate children; he wished to see the order to which I belonged restored to the position it deserved to occupy.

It is difficult to express what I felt in quitting the Dauphin. A magnificent and near future opened out before me. I saw a prince, pious, just, débonnaire,

* This incredibly serious tone adopted in reference to mere questions of etiquette and precedence is worthy of remark.

enlightened, and seeking to become more so; with principles completely in accord with my own, and capacity to carry out those principles when the time for doing so arrived. I relished deliciously a confidence so precious and so full, upon the most momentous matters, and at a first interview. I felt all the sweetness of this perspective, and of my deliverance from a servitude which, in spite of myself, I sometimes could not help showing myself impatient of. I felt too that I now had an opportunity of elevating myself, and of contributing to those grand works, for the happiness and advantage of the state I so much wished to see accomplished.

A few days after this I had another interview with the Dauphin. I was introduced secretly as before, so that no one perceived either my coming or my departure. The same subjects we had previously touched upon we now entered into again, and more amply than on the former occasion. The Dauphin, in taking leave of me, gave me full permission to see him in private as often as I desired, though in public I was still to be circumspect.

Indeed there was need of great circumspection in carrying on even private intercourse with the Dauphin. From this time I continually saw him in his cabinet, talking with him in all liberty upon the various persons of the Court, and upon the various subjects relating to the state; but always with the same secrecy as at first. This was absolutely necessary; as I have just said, I was still in a sort of half disgrace: the King did not regard me with the eyes of favour; Madame de

Maintenon was resolutely averse to me. If they two had suspected my strict intimacy with the heir to the throne, I should have been assuredly lost.

To show what need there was of precaution in my private interviews with the Dauphin, let me here relate an incident which one day occurred when we were closeted together, and which might have led to the gravest results.

The prince lodged then in one of the four grand suites of apartments, on the same level as the Salon, —the suite that was broken up during an illness of Madame la Princesse de Conti, to make way for a grand staircase, the narrow and crooked one in use annoying the King when he ascended it. The chamber of the Dauphin was there; the bed had its foot towards the windows; by the chimney was the door of the obscure wardrobe by which I entered; between the chimney and one of the two windows was a little portable bureau; in front of the ordinary entrance door of the chamber and behind the bureau was the door of one of the Dauphine's rooms; between the two windows was a chest of drawers which was used for papers only.

There were always some moments of conversation before the Dauphin set himself down at his bureau, and ordered me to place myself opposite him. Having become more free with him, I took the liberty to say one day in these first moments of our discourse, that he would do well to bolt the door behind him, the door I mean of the Dauphine's chamber. He said that the Dauphine would not come, it not being her hour. I replied that I did not fear that princess herself, but the crowd

that always accompanied her. He was obstinate, and would not bolt the door. I did not dare to press him more. He sat down before his bureau, and ordered me to sit also. Our deliberation was long; afterwards we sorted our papers. Here let me say this—Every time I went to see the Dauphin I garnished all my pockets with papers, and I often smiled within myself passing through the Salon, at seeing there many people who at that moment were in my pockets, and who were far indeed from suspecting the important discussion that was going to take place. To return: the Dauphin gave me his papers to put in my pocket, and kept mine. He locked up some in his cupboard, and instead of locking up the others in his bureau, kept them out, and began talking to me, his back to the chimney, his papers in one hand, his keys in the other. I was standing at the bureau looking for some other papers, when on a sudden the door in front of me opened, and the Dauphine entered!

The first appearance of all three—for thank God! she was alone—the astonishment, the countenance of all have never left my memory. Our fixed eyes, our statue-like immobility, and our embarrassment were all alike, and lasted longer than a slow pater-noster. The Princesse spoke first. She said to the Prince in a very ill-assured voice, that she had not imagined him in such good company; smiling upon him and upon me. I had scarce time to smile also and to lower my eyes, before the Dauphin replied.

"Since you find me so," said he, smiling in turn, "leave me so."

For an instant she looked on him, he and she both smiling at each other more; then she looked on me, still smiling with greater liberty than at first, made a pirouette, went away and closed the door, beyond the threshold of which she had not come.

Never have I seen woman so astonished; never man so taken aback, as the Prince after the Dauphine's departure; and never man, to say truth, was so afraid as I was at first, though I quickly reassured myself when I found that our intruder was alone. As soon as she had closed the door, "Well, Monsieur," said I to the Dauphin, "if you had drawn the bolt?"

"You were right," he replied, "and I was wrong. But no harm is done. She was alone fortunately, and I guarantee to you her secresy."

"I am not troubled," said I to him, (yet I was so mightily) "but it is a miracle she was alone. With her suite you would have escaped with a scolding perhaps, but for me, I should have been utterly lost."

He admitted again he had been wrong, and assured me more and more that our secret was safe. The Dauphine had caught us, not only *tête-à-tête*—of which no one had the least suspicion—she had caught us in the fact, so to say, our crimes in our hands. I felt that she would not expose the Dauphin, but I feared an after-revelation through some over easy confidant. Nevertheless our secret was so well kept if confided that it never transpired. We finished, I to pocket, the Prince to lock up the papers. The rest of the conversation was short and I withdrew by the wardrobe as usual. M. de Beauvilliers to whom I related this

adventure shortly afterwards, grew pale at first, but recovered when I said the Dauphine was alone. He blamed the imprudence of the Dauphin, but assured me my secret was safe. Ever since that adventure the Dauphine often smiled upon me when we met, as if to remind me of it, and showed marked attention to me.

No sooner did I feel myself pretty firmly established on this footing of delicious intimacy with the Dauphin than I conceived the desire to unite him with M. le Duc d'Orleans through the means of M. de Beauvilliers. At the very outset, however, an obstacle arose in my path.

I have already said, that the friendship of M. d'Orleans for his daughter, Madame la Duchesse de Berry, had given employment to the tongues of Satan, set in motion by hatred and jealousy. Evil reports even reached M. le Duc de Berry, who on his part, wishing to enjoy the society of his wife in full liberty, was importuned by the continual presence near her, of her father. To ward off a quarrel between son-in-law and father-in-law, based upon so false and so odious a foundation, appeared to Madame de Saint Simon and myself a pressing duty.

I had already tried to divert M. le Duc d'Orleans from an assiduity which wearied M. le Duc de Berry; but I had not succeeded. I believed it my duty then to return to the charge more hotly; and remembering my previous ill-success, I prefaced properly, and then said what I had to say. M. d'Orleans was astonished; he cried out against the horror of such a vile impu-

tation and the villainy that had carried it to M. le Duc de Berry. He thanked me for having warned him of it, a service few besides myself would have rendered him. I left him to draw the proper and natural conclusion on the conduct he should pursue. This conversation passed one day at Versailles about four o'clock in the afternoon.

On the morrow Madame de Saint Simon related to me, that returning home the previous evening, from the supper and the cabinet of the King with Madame la Duchesse de Berry, the Duchesse had passed straight into the wardrobe and called her there; and then with a cold and angry air, said she was very much astonished that I wished to get up a quarrel between her and M. le Duc d'Orleans. Madame Saint Simon exhibited surprise, but Madame la Duchesse de Berry declared that nothing was so true; that I wished to estrange M. d'Orleans from her, but that I should not succeed; and immediately related all that I had just said to her father. He had had the goodness to repeat it to her an hour afterwards! Madame de Saint Simon still more surprised, listened attentively to the end, and replied that this horrible report was public, that she herself could see what consequences it would have, false and abominable as it might be, and feel whether it was not important that M. le Duc d'Orleans should be informed of it. She added, that I had shown such proofs of my attachment for them and of my desire for their happiness, that I was above all suspicion. Then she curtsied and leaving the Princess went to bed. This scene appeared to me enormous.

For some time after this I ceased entirely to see M. le Duc d'Orleans and Madame la Duchesse de Berry. They cajoled me with all sorts of excuses, apologies, and so forth, but I remained frozen. They redoubled their excuses and their prayers. Friendship, I dare not say compassion, seduced me, and I allowed myself to be led away. In a word, we were reconciled. I kept aloof, however, from Madame la Duchesse de Berry as much as possible, visiting her only for form's sake; and as long as she lived never changed in this respect.

Being reconciled with M. d'Orleans, I again thought of my project of uniting him to the Dauphin through M. Beauvilliers. He had need of some support, for on all sides he was sadly out of favour. His debauchery and his impiety, which he had quitted for a time after separating himself from Madame d'Argenton his mistress, had now seized on him again as firmly as ever. It seemed as though there were a wager between him and his daughter, Madame la Duchesse de Berry, which should cast most contempt on religion and good manners.

The King was nothing ignorant of the conduct of his nephew. He had been much shocked with the return to debauchery and low company. The enemies of M. d'Orleans, foremost among which was M. du Maine, had therefore everything in their favour. As I have said, without some support M. d'Orleans seemed in danger of being utterly lost.

It was no easy matter to persuade M. de Beauvilliers to fall in with the plan I had concocted, and lend his

aid to it. But, I worked him hard. I dwelt upon the taste of the Dauphin for history, science, and the arts, and showed what a ripe knowledge of those subjects M. d'Orleans had, and what agreeable conversation thereon they both might enjoy together. In brief I won over M. de Beauvilliers to my scheme. M. d'Orleans, on his side, saw without difficulty the advantage to him of union with the Dauphin. To bring it about I laid before him two conditions. One, that when in the presence of the Prince he should suppress that detestable heroism of impiety he affected more than he felt, and allow no licentious expressions to escape him. The second was to go less often into evil company at Paris, and if he must continue his debauchery, to do so at the least within closed doors, and avoid all public scandal. He promised obedience, and was faithful to his promise. The Dauphin perceived and approved the change; little by little the object of my desire was gained.

As I have already said, it would be impossible for me to express all the joy I felt at my deliverance from the dangers I was threatened with during the lifetime of Monseigneur. My respect, esteem, and admiration for the Dauphin grew more and more day by day, as I saw his noble qualities blossom out in richer luxuriance. My hopes, too, took a brighter colour from the rising dawn of prosperity that was breaking around me. Alas! that I should be compelled to relate the cruel manner in which envious fortune took from me the cup of gladness just as I was raising it to my lips.

CHAPTER II.

Warnings to the Dauphin and Dauphine—The Dauphine sickens and dies—Illness of the Dauphin—His death—Character and manners of the Dauphine—And of the Dauphin.

On Monday, the 18th of January, 1712, after a visit to Versailles, the King went to Marly. I mark expressly this journey. No sooner were we settled there than Boudin, chief doctor of the Dauphine, warned her to take care of herself, as he had received sure information that there was a plot to poison her and the Dauphin, to whom he made a similar communication. Not content with this he repeated it with a terrified manner to everybody in the *salon*, and frightened all who listened to him. The King spoke to him about it in private. Boudin declared that his information was good, and yet that he did not know whence it came; and he stuck to this contradiction. For, if he did not know where the information came from, how could he be assured it was trustworthy?

The most singular thing is, that twenty-four hours after Boudin had uttered this warning, the Dauphin received a similar one from the King of Spain, vague, and without mentioning whence obtained, and yet also declared to be of good source. In this only the

Dauphin was named distinctly—the Dauphine obscurely and by implication—at least, so the Dauphin explained the matter, and I never heard that he said otherwise. People pretended to despise these stories of origin unknown, but they were struck by them nevertheless, and in the midst of the amusements and occupations of the Court, seriousness, silence and consternation were spread.*

The King, as I have said, went to Marly on Monday, the 18th of January, 1712. The Dauphine came there early with a face very much swelled, and went to bed at once; yet she rose at seven o'clock in the evening, because the King wished her to preside in the *salon*. She played there, in morning dress, with her head wrapped up, visited the King in the apartment of Madame de Maintenon just before his supper, and then again went to bed, where she supped. On the morrow, the 19th, she rose only to play in the *salon*, and see the King, returning to her bed and supping there. On the 20th her swelling diminished, and she was better. She was subject to this complaint, which was caused by her teeth. She passed the following days as usual. On Monday, the 1st of February, the Court returned to Versailles.

On Friday, the 5th of February, the Duc de Noailles gave a very fine box full of excellent Spanish snuff

* These stories, and the subsequent events that seemed to confirm them, have never been explained. It is unfortunate, however, that St. Simon should just previously have brought about an intimacy between the Duc d'Orleans and the Dauphin, the Duc having so repeatedly been accused of poisoning practices.

to the Dauphine, who took some, and liked it. This was towards the end of the morning. Upon entering her cabinet (closed to everybody else) she put this box upon the table, and left it there. Towards the evening she was seized with trembling fits of fever. She went to bed, and could not rise again even to go to the King's cabinet after the supper. On Saturday, the 6th of February, the Dauphine who had had fever all night, did not fail to rise at her ordinary hour, and to pass the day as usual; but in the evening the fever returned. She was but middling all that night, a little worse the next day; but towards ten o'clock at night she was suddenly seized by a sharp pain under the temple. It did not extend to the dimensions of a ten sous piece, but was so violent that she begged the King, who was coming to see her, not to enter. This kind of madness of suffering lasted without intermission until Monday, the 8th, and was proof against tobacco chewed and smoked, a quantity of opium, and two bleedings in the arms. Fever showed itself more when this pain was a little calmed; the Dauphin said she had suffered more than in childbirth.

Such a violent illness filled the chamber with rumours concerning the snuff-box given to the Dauphine by the Duc de Noailles. In going to bed the day she had received it and was seized by fever, she spoke of the snuff to her ladies, highly praising it and the box, which she told one of them to go and look for upon the table in the cabinet, where, as I have said, it had been left. The box could not be found, although

looked for high and low. This disappearance had seemed very extraordinay from the first moment it became known. Now, joined to the grave illness with which the Dauphine was so cruelly assailed, it aroused the most sombre suspicions. Nothing, however, was breathed of these suspicions, beyond a very restricted circle; for the Princess took snuff with the knowledge of Madame de Maintenon but without that of the King, who would have made a fine scene if he had discovered it. This was what was feared, if the singular loss of the box became divulged.

Let me here say, that although one of my friends, the Archbishop of Rheims, believed to his dying day that the Duc de Noailles had poisoned the Dauphine by means of this box of Spanish snuff, I never could induce myself to believe so too. The Archbishop declared that in the manner of the Duc de Noailles, after quitting the chamber of the Princess, there was something which suggested both confusion and contentment. He brought forward other proofs of guilt, but they made no impression upon me. I endeavoured, on the contrary, to shake his belief, but my labour was in vain. I entreated him, however, at least to maintain the most profound silence upon his horrible thought, and he did so.

Those who afterwards knew the history of the box —and they were in good number,—were as inaccessible to suspicion as I; and nobody thought of charging the Duc de Noailles with the offence it was said he had committed. As for me, I believed in his guilt so little that our intimacy remained the same; and although

that intimacy grew even up to the death of the King, we never spoke of this fatal snuff-box.

During the night, from Monday to Tuesday, the 9th of February, the lethargy was great. During the day the King approached the bed many times: the fever was strong, the awakenings were short; the head was confused, and some marks upon the skin gave tokens of measles, because they extended quickly, and because many people at Versailles and at Paris were known to be, at this time, attacked with that disease. The night from Tuesday to Wednesday passed so much the more badly, because the hope of measles had already vanished. The King came in the morning to see Madame la Dauphine, to whom an emetic had been given. It operated well, but produced no relief. The Dauphin, who scarcely ever left the bed-side of his wife, was forced into the garden to take the air, of which he had much need; but his disquiet led him back immediately into the chamber. The malady increased towards the evening, and at eleven o'clock there was a considerable augmentation of fever. The night was very bad. On Thursday, the 11th of February, at nine o'clock in the morning, the King entered the Dauphine's chamber, which Madame de Maintenon scarcely ever left, except when he was in her apartments. The Princess was so ill that it was resolved to speak to her of receiving the sacrament. Prostrated though she was she was surprised at this. She put some questions as to her state; replies as little terrifying as possible were given to her, and little by little she was warned against delay.

Grateful for this advice, she said she would prepare herself.

After some time, accidents being feared, Father la Rue, her (Jesuit) confessor, whom she had always appeared to like, approached her to exhort her not to delay confession. She looked at him, replied that she understood him, and then remained silent. Like a sensible man he saw what was the matter, and at once said that if she had any objection to confess to him to have no hesitation in admitting it. Thereupon she indicated that she should like to have M. Bailly, priest of the mission of the parish of Versailles. He was a man much esteemed, but not altogether free from the suspicion of Jansenism. Bailly, as it happened, had gone to Paris. This being told her, the Dauphine asked for Father Noel, who was instantly sent for.

The excitement that this change of confessor made at a moment so critical may be imagined. All the cruelty of the tyranny that the King never ceased to exercise over every member of his family was now apparent. They could not have a confessor not of his choosing! What was his surprise and the surprise of all the Court, to find that in these last terrible moments of life the Dauphine wished to change her confessor, whose Order even she repudiated!

Meanwhile the Dauphin had given way. He had hidden his own illness as long as he could, so as not to leave the pillow of his Dauphine. Now the fever he had was too strong to be dissimulated; and the doctors who wished to spare him the sight of the horrors they foresaw, forgot nothing to induce him to

stay in his chamber, where, to sustain him, false news was, from time to time, brought him of the state of his spouse.

The confession of the Dauphine was long. Extreme unction was administered immediately afterwards; and the holy viaticum directly. An hour afterwards the Dauphine desired the prayers for the dying to be said. They told her she was not yet in that state, and with words of consolation exhorted her to try and get to sleep. Seven doctors of the Court and of Paris were sent for. They consulted together in the presence of the King and Madame de Maintenon. All with one voice were in favour of bleeding at the foot; and in case it did not have the effect desired, to give an emetic at the end of the night. The bleeding was executed at seven o'clock in the evening. The return of the fever came and was found less violent than the preceding. The night was cruel. The King came early next morning to see the Dauphine. The emetic she took at about nine o'clock had little effect. The day passed in symptoms each more sad than the other; consciousness only at rare intervals. All at once, towards evening, the whole chamber fell into dismay. A number of people were allowed to enter although the King was there. Just before she expired he left, mounted into his coach at the foot of the grand staircase, and with Madame de Maintenon and Madame de Caylus went away to Marly. They were both in the most bitter grief, and had not the courage to go to the Dauphin. Upon arriving at Marly the King supped in his own room; and passed a short time with M.

d'Orleans and his natural children. M. le Duc de Berry, entirely occupied with his affliction which was great and real, had remained at Versailles with Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who, transported with joy upon seeing herself delivered from a powerful rival, to whom, however, she owed all, made her face do duty for her heart.

Monseigneur le Dauphin, ill and agitated by the most bitter grief, kept his chamber; but on Saturday morning the 13th, being pressed to go to Marly to avoid the horror of the noise overhead where the Dauphine was lying dead, he set out for that place at seven o'clock in the morning. Shortly after arriving he heard mass in the chapel, and thence was carried in a chair to the window of one of his rooms. Madame de Maintenon came to see him there afterwards; the anguish of the interview was speedily too much for her, and she went away. Early in the morning I went uninvited to see M. le Dauphin. He showed me that he perceived this with an air of gentleness and of affection which penetrated me. But I was terrified with his looks, constrained, fixed and with something wild about them, with the change in his face and with the marks there, livid rather than red, that I observed in good number and large; marks observed by the others also. The Dauphin was standing. In a few minutes he was apprised that the King had awaked. The tears that he had restrained, now rolled from his eyes; he turned round at the news but said nothing, remaining stock still. His three attendants proposed to him, once or twice, that he should go to the King. He neither spoke nor

stirred. I approached and made signs to him to go, then softly spoke to the same effect. Seeing that he still remained speechless and motionless, I made bold to take his arm, representing to him that sooner or later he must see the King, who expected him, and assuredly with the desire to see and embrace him; and pressing him in this manner, I took the liberty to gently push him. He cast upon me a look that pierced my soul and went away. I followed him some few steps and then withdrew to recover breath; I never saw him again. May I by the mercy of God, see him eternally where God's goodness doubtless has placed him!

The Dauphin reached the chamber of the King, full just then of company. As soon as he appeared the King called him and embraced him tenderly again and again. These first moments, so touching, passed in words broken by sobs and tears.

Shortly afterwards the King looking at the Dauphin was terrified by the same things that had previously struck me with afright. Everybody around was so, also the doctors more than the others. The King ordered them to feel his pulse; that they found bad, so they said afterwards; for the time they contented themselves with saying it was not regular, and that the Dauphin would do wisely to go to bed. The King embraced him again, recommended him very tenderly to take care of himself, and ordered him to go to bed. He obeyed and rose no more!

It was now late in the morning. The King had passed a cruel night and had a bad headache; he saw at his dinner the few courtiers who presented them-

selves, and after dinner went to the Dauphin. The fever had augmented: the pulse was worse than before. The king passed into the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, and the Dauphin was left with his attendants and his doctors. He spent the day in prayers and holy reading.

On the morrow, Sunday, the uneasiness felt on account of the Dauphin augmented. He himself did not conceal his belief that he should never rise again, and that the plot Boudin had warned him of, had been executed. He explained himself to this effect more than once, and always with a disdain of earthly grandeur and an incomparable submission and love of God. It is impossible to describe the general consternation. On Monday the 15th, the King was bled. The Dauphin was no better than before. The King and Madame de Maintenon saw him separately several times during the day, which was passed in prayers and reading.

On Tuesday the 16th, the Dauphin was worse. He felt himself devoured by a consuming fire, which the external fever did not seem to justify; but the pulse was very extraordinary and exceedingly menacing. This was a deceptive day. The marks on the Dauphin's face extended over all the body. They were regarded as the marks of measles. Hope arose thereon, but the doctors and the most clear-sighted of the Court could not forget that these same marks had shown themselves on the body of the Dauphine; a fact unknown out of her chamber until after death.

On Wednesday the 17th, the malady considerably increased. I had news at all moments of the Dau-

phin's state from Cheverny, an excellent apothecary of the King and of my family. He hid nothing from us. He had told us what he thought of the Dauphine's illness; he told us now what he thought of the Dauphin's. I no longer hoped therefore, or rather I hoped to the end, against all hope.

On Wednesday the pains increased. They were like a devouring fire, but more violent than ever. Very late into the evening the Dauphin sent to the King for permission to receive the communion early the next morning, without ceremony and without display, at the mass performed in his chamber. Nobody heard of this, that evening; it was not known until the following morning. I was in extreme desolation; I scarcely saw the King once a day. I did nothing but go in quest of news several times a day, and to the house of M. de Chevreuse, where I was completely free. M. de Chevreuse—always calm, always sanguine—endeavoured to prove to us by his medical reasonings that there was more reason to hope than to fear, but he did so with a tranquillity that roused my impatience. I returned home to pass a cruel night.

On Thursday morning, the 18th of February, I learned that the Dauphin, who had waited for midnight with impatience, had heard mass immediately after the communion, had passed two hours in devout communication with God, and that his reason then became embarrassed. Madame de St. Simon told me afterwards that he had received extreme unction: in fine, that he died at half-past eight. These memoirs are not written to describe my private sentiments. But

in reading them,—if, long after me, they shall ever appear,—my state and that of Madame de Saint Simon will only too keenly be felt. I will content myself with saying, that the first days after the Dauphin's death scarcely appeared to us more than moments; that I wished to quit all, to withdraw from the Court and the world, and that I was only hindered by the wisdom, conduct, and power over me of Madame de Saint Simon, who yet had much trouble to subue my sorrowful desires.

Let me say something now of the young prince and his spouse, whom we thus lost in such quick succession.

Never did princess arrive amongst us so young with so much instruction, or with such capacity to profit by instruction. Her skilful father, who thoroughly knew our Court, had painted it to her, and had made her acquainted with the only manner of making herself happy there. From the first moment of her arrival she had acted upon his lessons. Gentle, timid, but adroit, fearing to give the slightest pain to anybody, and, though all lightness and vivacity, very capable of far-stretching views; constraint, even to annoyance, cost her nothing, though she felt all its weight. Complacency was natural to her, flowed from her, and was exhibited towards every member of the Court.

Regularly plain, with cheeks hanging, a forehead too prominent, a nose without meaning, thick biting lips, hair and eyebrows of dark chestnut, and well planted; the most speaking and most beautiful eyes in the world; few teeth, and those all rotten, about which she was the first to talk and jest; the most

beautiful complexion and skin; not much bosom, but what there was admirable; the throat long, with the suspicion of a goître, which did not ill become her; her head carried gallantly, majestically, gracefully; her mien noble; her smile most expressive; her figure long, round, slender, easy, perfectly-shaped; her walk that of a goddess upon the clouds: with such qualifications she pleased supremely. Grace accompanied her every step, and shone through her manners and her most ordinary conversation. An air always simple and natural, often naïve, but seasoned with wit—this with the ease peculiar to her, charmed all who approached her, and communicated itself to them. She wished to please even the most useless and the most ordinary persons, and yet without making an effort to do so. You were tempted to believe her wholly and solely devoted to those with whom she found herself. Her gaiety—young, quick, and active—animated all; and her nymph-like lightness carried her everywhere, like a whirlwind which fills several places at once, and gives them movement and life. She was the ornament of all diversions, the life and soul of all pleasure, and at balls ravished everybody by the justness and perfection of her dancing. She could be amused by playing for small sums, but liked high gambling better, and was an excellent, good-tempered, and bold gamester.

She spared nothing, not even her health, to gain Madame de Maintenon, and through her the King. Her suppleness towards them was without example, and never for a moment was at fault. She accompanied it with all the discretion that her knowledge of

them, acquired by study and experience, had given her, and could measure their dispositions to an inch. In this way she had acquired a familiarity with them such as none of the King's children, not even the bastards, had approached.

In public, serious, measured, with the King, and in timid decorum with Madame de Maintenon, whom she never addressed except as *my aunt*, thus prettily confounding friendship and rank. In private, prattling, skipping, flying around them, now perched upon the sides of their arm chairs, now playing upon their knees, she clasped them round the neck, embraced them, kissed them, caressed them, rumpled them, tickled them under the chin, tormented them, rummaged their tables, their papers, their letters, broke open the seals, and read the contents in spite of opposition, if she saw that her waggeries were likely to be received in good part. When the King was with his ministers, when he received couriers, when the most important affairs were under discussion, she was present, and with such liberty, that, hearing the King and Madame de Maintenon speak one evening with affection of the Court of England, at the time when peace was hoped for from Queen Anne, "My aunt," she said, "you must admit that in England the queens govern better than the kings; and do you know why, my aunt?" asked she, running about and gambolling all the time, "because under kings it is women who govern, and men under queens." The joke is that they both laughed, and said she was right.

The King really could not do without her. Every-

thing went wrong with him if she was not by; even at his public supper, if she were away an additional cloud of seriousness and silence settled around him. She took great care to see him every day upon arriving and departing; and if some ball in winter, or some pleasure party in summer, made her lose half the night, she nevertheless adjusted things so well that she went and embraced the King the moment he was up, and amused him with a description of the fête.

She was so far removed from the thoughts of death, that on Candlemas-day she talked with Madame de Saint Simon of people who had died since she had been at Court, and of what she would herself do in old age, of the life she would lead, and of such like matters. Alas! it pleased God, for our misfortune, to dispose of her differently.

With all her coquetry—and she was not wanting in it—never woman seemed to take less heed of her appearance; her toilette was finished in a moment, she cared nothing for finery except at balls and fêtes; if she displayed a little at other times it was simply in order to please the King. If the Court subsisted after her it was only to languish. Never was princess so regretted, never one so worthy of it: regrets have not yet passed away, the involuntary and secret bitterness they caused still remain, with a frightful blank not yet filled up.

Let me now turn to the Dauphin.

The youth of this prince made every one tremble. Stern and choleric to the last degree, and even against inanimate objects; impetuous with frenzy, incapable

of suffering the slightest resistance even from the hours and the elements, without flying into a passion that threatened to destroy his body; obstinate to excess; passionately fond of all kind of voluptuousness, of women, with even a worse passion strongly developed at the same time; fond not less of wine, good living, hunting, music, and gaming, in which last he could not endure to be beaten; in fine, abandoned to every passion, and transported by every pleasure; oftentimes wild, naturally disposed towards cruelty; barbarous in raillery, and with an all-powerful capacity for ridicule. He looked down upon all men as from the sky, as atoms with whom he had nothing in common; even his brothers scarcely appeared connecting links between himself and human nature, although all had been educated together in perfect equality. His sense and penetration shone through everything, His replies, even in anger, astonished everybody. He amused himself with the most abstract knowledge. The extent and vivacity of his intellect were prodigious, and rendered him incapable of applying himself to one study at a time.

So much intelligence and of such a kind, joined to such vivacity, sensibility, and passion, rendered his education difficult. But God, who is the master of all hearts, and whose divine spirit breathes where he wishes, worked a miracle on this prince between his eighteenth and twentieth years. From this abyss he came out affable, gentle, humane, moderate, patient, modest, penitent, and humble; and austere, even more than harmonised with his position. Devoted to his

duties, feeling them to be immense, he thought only how to unite the duties of son and subject with those he saw to be destined for himself. The shortness of each day was his only sorrow. All his force, all his consolation, was in prayer and pious reading. He clung with joy to the cross of his Saviour, repenting sincerely of his past pride. The King, with his outside devotion, soon saw with secret displeasure his own life censured by that of a prince so young, who refused himself a new desk in order to give the money it would cost to the poor, and who did not care to accept some new gilding with which it was proposed to furnish his little room.

Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne alarmed at so austere a spouse, left nothing undone in order to soften him. Her charms, with which he was smitten, the cunning and the unbridled importunities of the young ladies of her suite, disguised in a hundred different forms—the attraction of parties and pleasures to which he was far from insensible,—all were displayed every day. But for a long time he behaved not like a prince but like a novice. On one occasion he refused to be present at a ball on Twelfth Night, and in various ways made himself ridiculous at Court.

In due time, however, he comprehended that the faithful performance of the duties proper to the state in which he had been placed, would be the conduct most agreeable to God. The bark of the tree, little by little, grew softer without affecting the solidity of the trunk. He applied himself to the studies which were necessary, in order to instruct himself in public affairs,

and at the same time he lent himself more to the world, doing so with so much grace, with such a natural air, that everybody soon began to grow reconciled to him.

The discernment of this prince was such, that, like the bee, he gathered the most perfect substance from the best and most beautiful flowers. He tried to fathom men, to draw from them the instruction and the light that he could hope for. He conferred sometimes, but rarely, with others besides his chosen few. I was the only one, not of that number, who had complete access to him; with me he opened his heart upon the present and the future with confidence, with sageness, with discretion. A volume would not describe sufficiently my private interviews with this prince,—what love of good! what forgetfulness of self! what researches! what fruit! what purity of purpose!—May I say it? what reflection of the divinity in that mind, candid, simple, strong, which as much as is possible here below had preserved the image of its maker!

If you had business, and thought of opening it to him, say for a quarter of an hour or half an hour, he gave you oftentimes two hours and more, according as he found himself at liberty. Yet he was without verbiage, compliments, prefaces, pleasantries, or other hindrances; went straight to the point, and allowed you to go also.

His undue scruples of devotion diminished every day, as he found himself face to face with the world; above all, he was well cured of the inclination for piety in preference to talent, that is to say, for making a

man ambassador, minister, or general, rather on account of his devotedness than of his capacity or experience. He saw the danger of inducing hypocrisy by placing devotion too high as a qualification for employ.

It was he who was not afraid to say publicly, in the Salon of Marly, "that a king is made for his subjects, and not the subjects for him;" a remark that, except under his own reign, which God did not permit, would have been the most frightful blasphemy.

Great God! what a spectacle you gave to us in him. What tender but tranquil views he had! What submission and love of God! What a consciousness of his own nothingness, and of his sins! What a magnificent idea of the infinite mercy! What religious and humble fear! What tempered confidence! What patience! What constant goodness for all who approached him! France fell, in fine, under this last chastisement. God showed to her a prince she merited not. The earth was not worthy of him; he was ripe already for the blessed eternity! *

* Whatever deduction we may make from this panegyric, it is evident that we are in presence of the results of the teaching of Fenelon, on which the prejudiced St. Simon lays far too little stress.

CHAPTER III.

Certainty of poison—The supposed criminal—Excitement of the people against M. d'Orleans — The cabal — My danger and escape — The Dauphin's casket.

The consternation at the event that had taken place was real and general; it penetrated to foreign lands and courts. Whilst the people wept for him who thought only of their relief, and all France lamented a prince who only wished to reign in order to render it flourishing and happy, the sovereigns of Europe publicly lamented him whom they regarded as their example, and whose virtues were preparing him to be their arbitrator, and the peaceful and revered moderator of nations. The Pope was so touched that he resolved of himself, to set aside all rule and hold expressly a consistory; deplored there the infinite loss the church and all Christianity had sustained, and pronounced a complete eulogium of the prince who caused the just regrets of all Europe.

On Saturday, the 13th, the corpse of the Dauphine was left in its bed with uncovered face, and opened the same evening at eleven in presence of all the faculty. On the 15th it was placed in the grand cabinet, where masses were continually said.

On Friday, the 19th, the corpse of Monseigneur le Dauphin was opened, a little more than twenty-four hours after his death, also in presence of all the faculty. His heart was immediately carried to Versailles, placed by the side of that of Madame le Dauphine. Both were afterwards taken to the Val de Grace. They arrived at midnight with a numerous cortège. All was finished in two hours. The corpse of Monseigneur le Dauphin was afterwards carried from Marly to Versailles, and placed by the side of that of Madame le Dauphine on the same estrade.

On Tuesday, the 23rd February, the two bodies were taken from Versailles to St. Dénis in the same chariot. The procession began to enter Paris by the Porte St. Honoré at two o'clock in the morning, and arrived between seven and eight o'clock in the morning at St. Dénis. There was great order in Paris, and no confusion.

On Tuesday, the 8th March, Monseigneur le Duc de Bretagne, eldest son of Monsieur le Dauphin, who had succeeded to the name and rank of his father, being then only five years and some months old, and who had been seized with measles within a few days, expired; in spite of all the remedies given him. His brother, M. le Duc d'Anjou, who still sucked, was taken ill at the same time, but thanks to the care of the Duchesse de Ventadour, whom in after life he never forgot, and who administered an antidote, escaped, and is now King.

Thus three Dauphins died in less than a year, and father, mother, and eldest son in twenty-four days!

On Wednesday, the 9th of March, the corpse of the little Dauphin was opened at night, and without any ceremony his heart was taken to the Val de Grace, his body to St. Dénis, and placed by the side of those of his father and mother. M. le Duc d'Anjou, now sole remaining child, succeeded to the title and to the rank of Dauphin.

I have said that the bodies of the Dauphin and the Dauphine were opened in presence of all the faculty. The report made upon the opening of the latter was not consolatory. Only one of the doctors declared there were no signs of poison; the rest were of the opposite opinion. When the body of the Dauphin was opened, everybody was terrified. His viscera were all dissolved; his heart had no consistency; its substance flowed through the hands of those who tried to hold it; an intolerable odour, too, filled the apartment. The majority of the doctors declared they saw in all this the effect of a very subtle and very violent poison, which had consumed all the interior of the body, like a burning fire. As before, there was one of their number who held different views, but this was Maréchal, who declared that to persuade the King of the existence of secret enemies of his family would be to kill him by degrees.

This medical opinion that the cause of the Dauphin's and the Dauphine's death was poison, soon spread like wildfire over the Court and the city. Public indignation fell upon M. d'Orleans, who was at once pointed out as the poisoner. The rapidity with which this rumour filled the Court, Paris, the provinces, the least

frequented places, the most isolated monasteries, the most deserted solitudes, all foreign countries and all the peoples of Europe, recalled to me the efforts of the cabal, which had previously spread such black reports against the honour of him whom all the world now wept, and showed that that cabal, though dispersed, was not dissolved.

In effect M. du Maine, now the head of the cabal, who had all to gain and nothing to lose by the death of the Dauphin and Dauphine, from both of whom he had studiously held aloof, and who thoroughly disliked M. d'Orleans, did all in his power to circulate this odious report. He communicated it to Madame de Maintenon, by whom it reached the King. In a short time all the Court, down to the meanest valets, publicly cried vengeance upon M. d'Orleans, with an air of the most unbridled indignation and of perfect security.

M. d'Orleans, with respect to the two losses that afflicted the public, had an interest the most directly opposite to that of M. du Maine; he had everything to gain by the life of the Dauphin and Dauphine, and unless he had been a monster vomited forth from hell he could not have been guilty of the crime with which he was charged. Nevertheless, the odious accusation flew from mouth to mouth, and took refuge in every breast.

Let us compare the interest M. d'Orleans had in the life of the Dauphin with the interest M. du Maine had in his death, and then look about for the poisoner. *

* The whole course of St. Simon's narrative would seem to point rather to the Duchesse de Berry as the guilty person than to any other. An at-

But this is not all. Let us remember how M. le Duc d'Orleans was treated by Monseigneur, and yet what genuine grief he displayed at the death of that prince. What a contrast was this conduct with that of M. du Maine at another time, who, after leaving the King (Louis XIV.) at the point of death, delivered over to an ignorant peasant, imitated that peasant so naturally and so pleasantly, that bursts of laughter extended to the gallery, and scandalised the passers by. This is a celebrated and very characteristic fact, which will find its proper place if I live long enough to carry these memoirs up to the death of the King.

M. d'Orleans was however already in such bad odour, that people were ready to believe anything to his discredit. They drank in this new report so rapidly, that on the 17th of February, as he went with Madame to give the holy water to the corpse of the Dauphine, the crowd of the people threw out all sorts of accusations against him, which both he and Madame very distinctly heard, without daring to show it, and were in trouble, embarrassment, and indignation, as may be imagined. There was even ground for fearing worse from an excited and credulous populace when M. d'Orleans went alone to give the holy water to the

tempt was made to poison the whole family of the heir to the throne—and only one child at the breast escaped by accident. If this child, afterwards Louis XV. had died, the Duc de Berry would have succeeded to the crown. What, therefore, can St. Simon mean by averring that the Duc d'Orleans had no interest in the death of the victims? If the whole plot had been successful, his favourite and too-beloved daughter would have been Queen. A better argument for his innocence is, that he afterwards suffered Louis XV. to live.

corpse of the Dauphin. For he had to endure on his passage atrocious insults from a populace which uttered aloud the most frightful observations, which pointed the finger at him with the coarsest epithets, and which believed it was doing him a favour in not falling upon him and tearing him to pieces!

Similar circumstances took place at the funeral procession. The streets resounded more with cries of indignation against M. d'Orleans and abuse of him than with grief. Silent precautions were not forgotten in Paris in order to check the public fury, the boiling over of which was feared at different moments. The people recompensed themselves by gestures, cries, and other atrocities, vomited against M. d'Orleans. Near the Palais Royal, before which the procession passed, the increase of shouts, of cries, of abuse, was so great, that for some minutes everything was to be feared.

It may be imagined what use M. du Maine contrived to make of the public folly, the rumours of the Paris *cafés*, the feeling of the *salon* of Marly, that of the parliament, the reports that arrived from the provinces and foreign countries. In a short time so overpowered was M. d'Orleans by the feeling against him everywhere exhibited, that acting upon very ill-judged advice he spoke to the King upon the subject, and begged to be allowed to surrender himself as a prisoner at the Bastile, until his character was cleared from stain.

I was terribly annoyed when I heard that M. d'Orleans had taken this step, which could not possibly lead to good. I had quite another sort of scheme in my head which I should have proposed to him had I

known of his resolve. Fortunately, however, the King was persuaded not to grant M. d'Orleans' request, out of which therefore nothing came. The Duc meanwhile lived more abandoned by everybody than ever; if in the *salon* he approached a group of courtiers, each, without the least hesitation, turned to the right or to the left and went elsewhere, so that it was impossible for him to accost anybody except by surprise, and if he did so he was left alone directly after with the most marked indecency. In a word, I was the only person, I say distinctly, the only person, who spoke to M. d'Orleans as before. Whether in his own house or in the palace I conversed with him, seated myself by his side in a corner of the *salon*, where assuredly we had no third person to fear, and walked with him in the gardens under the very windows of the King and of Madame de Maintenon.

Nevertheless, all my friends warned me that if I pursued this conduct so opposite to that in vogue, I should assuredly fall into disgrace. I held firm. I thought that when we did not believe our friends guilty we ought not to desert them, but, on the contrary, to draw closer to them, as by honour bound, give them the consolation due from us, and show thus to the world our hatred for calumny. My friends insisted; gave me to understand that the King disapproved my conduct, that Madame de Maintenon was annoyed at it: they forgot nothing to awaken my fears. But I was insensible to all they said to me, and did not omit seeing M. d'Orleans a single day; often stopping with him two and three hours at a time.

A few weeks had passed over thus, when one morning M. de Beauvilliers called upon me, and urged me to plead business, and at once withdraw to La Ferté; intimating that if I did not do so of my own accord, I should be compelled by an order from the King. He never explained himself more fully, but I have always remained persuaded that the King or Madame de Maintenon had sent him to me, and had told him that I should be banished if I did not banish myself. Neither my absence nor my departure made any stir; nobody suspected anything. I was carefully informed, without knowing by whom, when my exile was likely to end: and I returned, after a month or five weeks, straight to the Court, where I kept up the same intimacy with M. d'Orleans as before.

But he was not yet at the end of his misfortunes. The Princesse des Ursins had not forgiven him his pleasantry at her expense. Chalais, one of her most useful agents, was despatched by her on a journey so mysterious that its obscurity has never been illuminated. He was eighteen days on the road, unknown, concealing his name, and passing within two leagues of Chalais, where his father and mother lived, without giving them any signs of life, although all were on very good terms. He loitered secretly in Poitou, and at last arrrested there a Cordelier monk, of middle age, in the convent of Bressuire, who cried, "Ah! I am lost!" upon being caught. Chalais conducted him to the prison of Poitiers, whence he despatched to Madrid an officer of dragoons he had brought with him, and who knew this Cordelier, whose

name has never transpired, although it is certain he was really a Cordelier, and that he was returning from a journey in Italy and Germany that had extended as far as Vienna. Chalais pushed on to Paris, and came to Marly on the 27th of April, a day on which the King had taken medicine. After dinner he was taken by Torcy to the King, with whom he remained half-an-hour, delaying thus the Council of State for the same time, and then returned immediately to Paris. So much trouble had not been taken for no purpose: and Chalais had not prostituted himself to play the part of prevôt to a miserable monk without expecting good winnings from the game. Immediately afterwards the most dreadful rumours were everywhere in circulation against M. d'Orleans, who, it was said, had poisoned the Dauphin and Dauphine by means of this monk, who, nevertheless, was far enough away from our Prince and Princess at the time of their death. In an instant Paris resounded with these horrors; the provinces were inundated with them, and immediately afterwards foreign countries—this too with an incredible rapidity, which plainly showed how well the plot had been prepared, —and a publicity that reached the very caverns of the earth. Madame des Ursins was not less served in Spain than M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon in France. The anger of the public was doubled. The Cordelier was brought, bound hand and foot, to the Bastile, and delivered up to D'Argenson, lieutenant of Police.*

* It is to be observed that whenever St.-Simon comes to talk of things

This D'Argenson rendered an account to the King of many things which Pontchartrain, as Secretary of State, considered to belong to his department. Pontchartrain was vexed beyond measure at this, and could not see without despair his subaltern become a kind of minister more feared, more valued, more in consideration than he, and conduct himself always in such manner that he gained many powerful friends, and made but few enemies, and those of but little moment. M. d'Orleans bowed before the storm that he could not avert; it could not increase the general desertion; he had accustomed himself to his solitude, and, as he had never heard this monk spoken of, had not the slightest fear on his account. D'Argenson, who questioned the Cordelier several times, and carried his replies daily to the King, was sufficiently adroit to pay his court to M. d'Orleans, by telling him that the prisoner had uttered nothing which concerned him, and by representing the services he did M. d'Orleans with the King. Like a sagacious man, D'Argenson saw the madness of popular anger devoid of all foundation, and which could not hinder M. d'Orleans from being a very considerable person in France, during a minority that the age of the King showed to be pretty near. He took care, therefore, to avail himself of the mystery which surrounded his office, to ingratiate himself more and more with M. d'Orleans, whom he had always carefully though secretly served; and this

in which he was himself engaged or particularly interested, he becomes declamatory and magniloquent, losing much of his picturesqueness and almost all his wit.

conduct, as will be seen in due time, procured him a large fortune.

But I have gone too far. I must retrace my steps, to speak of things I have omitted to notice in their proper place.

The two Dauphins and the Dauphine were interred at Saint Dénis, on Monday, the 18th of April. The funeral oration was pronounced by Maboul, bishop of Aleth, and pleased; M. de Metz, chief chaplain, officiated; the service commenced at about eleven o'clock. As it was very long, it was thought well to have at hand a large vase of vinegar, in case anybody should be ill. M. de Metz having taken the first oblation, and observing that very little wine was left for the second, asked for more. This large vase of vinegar was supposed to be wine, and M. de Metz, who wished to strengthen himself, said, washing his fingers over the chalice, "fill right up." He swallowed all at a draught, and did not perceive until the end that he had drunk vinegar; his grimace and his complaint caused some little laughter round him; and he often related this adventure, which much soured him.

On Monday, the 10th of May, the funeral service for the Dauphin and Dauphine was performed at Notre Dame.

Let me here say, that before the Prince and his spouse were buried, that is to say, the 6th of April, the King gave orders for the recommencement of the usual play at Marly; and that M. le Duc de Berry, and Madame la Duchesse de Berry presided in the *salon* at the public lansquenet and brelan, and the different

gaming tables for all the Court. In a short time the King dined in Madame de Maintenon's apartments once or twice a week, and had music there. And all this, as I have remarked with the corpse of the Dauphin and that of the Dauphine still above ground!

The gap left by the death of the Dauphine could not, however, be easily filled up. Some months after her loss, the King began to feel great ennui steal upon him in the hours when he had no work with his ministers. The few ladies admitted into the apartments of Madame de Maintenon when he was there, were unable to entertain him. Music, frequently introduced, languished from that cause. Detached scenes from the comedies of Molière were thought of, and were played by the King's musicians, comedians for the nonce. Madame de Maintenon introduced, too, the Maréchale de Villeroy, to amuse the King by relating their youthful adventures.

Evening amusements became more and more frequent in Madame de Maintenon's apartments, where, however, nothing could fill up the void left by the poor Dauphine.

I have said little of the grief I felt at the loss of the prince whom everybody so deeply regretted. As will be believed, it was bitter and profound. The day of his death, I barricaded myself in my own house, and only left it for one instant in order to join the King at his promenade in the gardens. The vexation I felt upon seeing him followed almost as usual, did not permit me to stop more than an instant. All the rest of the stay at Versailles, I scarcely left my room

except to visit M. de Beauvilliers. I will admit that, to reach M. de Beauvilliers' house, I made a circuit between the canal and the gardens of Versailles, so as to spare myself the sight of the chamber of death, which I had not force enough to approach. I admit that I was weak. I was sustained neither by the piety, superior to all things, of M. de Beauvilliers, nor by that of Madame de Saint Simon, who nevertheless not the less suffered. The truth is, I was in despair. To those who know my position, this will appear less strange than my being able to support at all, so complete a misfortune. I experienced this sadness precisely at the same age as that of my father when he lost Louis XIII.; but he at least had enjoyed the results of favour, whilst I, *Gustavi paululum mellis, et ecce morior.* Yet this was not all.

In the casket of the Dauphin there were several papers he had asked me for. I had drawn them up in all confidence; he had preserved them in the same manner. There was one, very large, in my hand, which if seen by the King, would have robbed me of his favour for ever; ruined me without hope of return. We do not think in time of such catastrophes. The King knew my handwriting; he did not know my mode of thought, but might pretty well have guessed it. I had sometimes supplied him with means to do so; my good friends of the Court had done the rest. The King when he discovered my paper would also discover on what close terms of intimacy I had been with the Dauphin, of which he had no suspicion. My anguish was then cruel, and there seemed every reason

to believe that if my secret was found out, I should be disgraced and exiled during all the rest of the King's reign.

What a contrast between the bright heaven I had so recently gazed upon and the abyss now yawning at my feet! But so it is in the Court and the world! I felt then the nothingness of even the most desirable future, by an inward sentiment, which, nevertheless, indicates how we cling to it. Fear on account of the contents of the casket had scarcely any power over me. I was obliged to reflect in order to return to it from time to time. Regret for this incomparable Dauphin pierced my heart, and suspended all the faculties of my soul. For a long time I wished to fly from the Court, so that I might never again see the deceitful face of the world; and it was some time before prudence and honour got the upper hand.

It so happened that the Duc de Beauvilliers himself was able to carry this casket to the King, who had the key of it. M. de Beauvilliers in fact resolved not to trust it out of his own hands, but to wait until he was well enough to take it to the King, so that he might then try to hide my papers from view. This task was difficult for he did not know the position in the casket of these dangerous documents, and yet it was our only resource. This terrible uncertainty lasted more than a fortnight.

On Tuesday, the 1st of March, M. de Beauvilliers carried the casket to the King. He came to me shortly after, and, before sitting down, indicated by signs that there was no further occasion for fear. He

then related to me that he had found the casket full of a mass of documents, finance projects, reports from the provinces, papers of all kinds, that he had read some of them to the King on purpose to weary him, and had succeeded so well that the King soon was satisfied by hearing only the titles; and, at last, tired out by not finding anything important, said it was not worth while to read more, and that there was nothing to do but to throw everything into the fire. The Duc assured me that he did not wait to be told twice, being all the more anxious to comply, because at the bottom of the casket he had seen some of my handwriting, which he had promptly covered up in taking other papers to read their titles to the King; and that immediately the word "fire" was uttered, he confusedly threw all the papers into the casket, and then emptied it near the fire, between the King and Madame de Maintenon, taking good care, as he did so, that my documents should not be seen,—even cautiously using the tongs in order to prevent any piece flying away, and not quitting the fireplace until he had seen every page consumed. We embraced each other, in the relief we reciprocally felt, relief proportioned to the danger we had run.

CHAPTER IV.

The King's selfishness—Defeat of the Czar—Death of Catinat—Last days of Vendôme—His body at the Escurial—Anecdote of Harlay and the Jacobins—Truce in Flanders—Wolves.

LET me here relate an incident which should have found a place earlier, but which has been omitted in order that what has gone before, might be uninterrupted. On the 16th of the previous July the King made a journey to Fontainebleau, where he remained until the 14th of September. I should suppress the bagatelle which happened on the occasion of this journey, if it did not serve more and more to characterise the King.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry was in the family way for the first time, had been so for nearly three months, was much inconvenienced, and had a pretty strong fever. M. Fagon, the doctor, thought it would be imprudent for her not to put off travelling for a day or two. Neither she nor M. d'Orleans dared to speak about it. M. le Duc de Berry timidly hazarded a word, and was ill received. Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans more timid still, addressed herself to Madame, and to Madame de Maintenon, who indifferent as they might be respecting Madame la

Duchesse de Berry, thought her departure so hazardous that, supported by Fagon, they spoke of it to the King. It was useless. They were not daunted however, and this dispute lasted three or four days. The end of it was, that the King grew thoroughly angry and agreed, by way of capitulation, that the journey should be performed in a boat instead of a coach.

It was arranged that Madame la Duchesse de Berry should leave Marly, where the King then was, on the 13th, sleep at the Palais Royal that night and repose herself there all the next day and night, that on the 15th she should set out for Petit-Bourg, where the King was to halt for the night, and arrive like him, on the 16th at Fontainebleau, the whole journey to be by the river. M. le Duc de Berry had permission to accompany his wife; but during the two nights they were to rest in Paris the King angrily forbade them to go anywhere, even to the opera, although that building joined the Palais Royal, and M. d'Orleans' box could be reached without going out of the palace.

On the 14th the King under pretence of inquiry after them, repeated this prohibition to M. le Duc de Berry and Madame his wife, and also to M. d'Orleans and Madame d'Orleans, who had been included in it. He carried his caution so far as to enjoin Madame de St. Simon to see that Madame le Duchesse de Berry obeyed the instructions she had received. As may be believed his orders were punctually obeyed. Madame de St. Simon could not refuse to remain and sleep in the Palais Royal, where the apartment of the queen-mother was given to her. All the while the party were

shut up there was a good deal of gaming in order to console M. le Duc de Berry for his confinement.

The provost of the merchants had orders to prepare boats for the trip to Fontainebleau. He had so little time that they were ill chosen. Madame la Duchesse de Berry embarked, however, on the 15th, and arrived, with fever, at ten o'clock at night at Petit-Bourg, where the King appeared rejoiced by an obedience so exact.

On the morrow the journey recommenced. In passing Melun, the boat of Madame la Duchesse de Berry struck against the bridge, was nearly capsized and almost swamped, so that they were all in great danger. They got off however with fear and a delay. Disembarking in great disorder at Valvin, where their equipages were waiting for them, they arrived at Fontainebleau two hours after midnight. The King, pleased beyond measure, went the next morning to see Madame la Duchesse de Berry in the beautiful apartment of the queen-mother that had been given to her. From the moment of her arrival she had been forced to keep her bed, and at six o'clock in the morning of the 21st of July she miscarried and was delivered of a daughter, still-born. Madame de St. Simon ran to tell the King; he did not appear much moved; he had been obeyed! The Duchesse de Beauvilliers, and the Marquise de Chatillon were named by the king, to carry the embryo to St. Denis. As it was only a girl, and as the miscarriage had no ill effect, consolation soon came.

It was some little time after this occurrence, that we

heard of the defeat of the Czar by the Grand Vizier upon the Pruth. The Czar annoyed by the protection the Porte had accorded to the King of Sweden (in retirement at Bender), made an appeal to arms, and fell into the same error as that which had occasioned the defeat of the King of Sweden by him. The Turks drew him to the Pruth across deserts supplied with nothing; if he did not risk all, by a very unequal battle, he must perish. The Czar was at the head of sixty thousand men: he lost more than thirty thousand on the Pruth, the rest were dying of hunger and misery; and he, without any resourses, could scarcely avoid surrendering himself and his forces to the Turks. In this pressing extremity, a common woman whom he had taken away from her husband, a drummer in the army, and whom he had publicly espoused after having repudiated and confined his own wife in a convent,—proposed that he should try by bribery to induce the Grand Vizier to allow him and the wreck of his forces to retreat. The Czar approved of the proposition, without hoping for success from it. He sent to the Grand Vizier and ordered him to be spoken to in secret. The Vizier was dazzled by the gold, the precious stones, and several valuable things that were offered to him. He accepted and received them; and signed a treaty by which the Czar was permitted to retire, with all who accompanied him, into his own states by the shortest road, the Turks to furnish him with provisions, with which he was entirely unprovided. The Czar, on his side, agreed to give up Azof as soon as he returned; destroy all the forts and burn all the

vessels that he had upon the Black Sea; allow the King of Sweden to return by Pomerania; and to pay the Turks and their Prince all the expenses of the war.

The Grand Vizier found such an opposition in the Divan to this treaty, and such boldness in the minister of the King of Sweden, who accompanied him, in exciting against him all the chiefs of the army, that it was within an ace of being broken; and the Czar, with everyone left to him, of being made prisoner. The latter was in no condition to make even the least resistance. The Grand Vizier had only to will it, in order to execute it on the spot. In addition to the glory of leading captive to Constantinople the Czar, his Court, and his troops, there would have been his ransom, which must have cost not a little. But if he had been thus stripped of his riches, they would have been for the Sultan, and the Grand Vizier preferred having them for himself. He braved it then with authority and menaces, and hastened the Czar's departure and his own. The Swedish minister, charged with protests from the principal Turkish chiefs, hurried to Constantinople, where the Grand Vizier was strangled upon arriving.

The Czar never forgot this service of his wife, by whose courage and presence of mind he had been saved. The esteem he conceived for her, joined to his friendship, induced him to crown her Czarina, and to consult her upon all his affairs and all his schemes. Escaped from danger, he was a long time without giving up Azof, or demolishing his forts on the Black

Sea. As for his vessels, he kept them nearly all, and would not allow the King of Sweden to return into Germany, as he had agreed, thus almost lighting up a fresh war with the Turk.

On the 6th of November, 1711, at about eight o'clock in the evening, the shock of an earthquake was felt at Paris and at Versailles; but it was so slight that few people perceived it. In several places towards Tourraine and Poitou, in Saxony, and in some of the German towns near, it was very perceptible at the same day and hour. At this date a new tontine was established in Paris.

I have so often spoken of Marshal Catinat, of his virtue, wisdom, modesty, and disinterestedness; of the rare superiority of his sentiments, and of his great qualities as captain, that nothing remains for me to say except that he died at this time very advanced in years, at his little house of Saint Gratien, near Saint Denis, where he had retired, and which he seldom quitted although receiving there but few friends. By his simplicity and frugality, his contempt for worldly distinction, and his uniformity of conduct, he recalled the memory of those great men, who after the best merited triumphs, peacefully returned to their plough, still loving their country and but little offended by the ingratitude of the Rome they had so well served. Catinat placed his philosophy at the service of his piety. He had intelligence, good sense, ripe reflection; and he never forgot his origin; his dress, his equipages, his furniture, all were of the greatest simplicity. His air and his deportment were so also.

He was tall, dark, and thin; had an aspect pensive, slow and somewhat mean; with very fine and expressive eyes. He deplored the signal faults that he saw succeed each other unceasingly; the gradual extinction of all emulation; the luxury, the emptiness, the ignorance, the confusion of ranks; the inquisition in the place of the police: he saw all the signs of destruction, and he used to say it was only a climax of dangerous disorder that could restore order to the realm.

Vendôme was one of the few to whom the death of the Dauphin and the Dauphine brought hope and joy. He had deemed himself expatriated for the rest of his life. He saw, now, good chances before him of returning to our Court, and of playing a part there again. He had obtained some honour in Spain; he aimed at others even higher, and hoped to return to France with all the honours of a Prince of the Blood. His idleness, his free living, his debauchery had prolonged his stay upon the frontier, where he had more facilities for gratifying his tastes than at Madrid. In that city, it is true, he did not much constrain himself, but he was forced to do so to some extent by courtly usages. He was, then, quite at home on the frontier; there was nothing to do; for the Austrians weakened by the departure of the English, were quite unable to attack; and Vendôme, floating upon the delights of his new dignities, thought only of enjoying himself in the midst of profound idleness, under pretext that operations could not at once be commenced.

In order to be more at liberty he separated from

the general officers, and established himself with his valets and two or three of his most familiar friends, cherished companions everywhere, at Vignarez, a little isolated hamlet, almost deserted, on the sea-shore and in the kingdom of Valencia. His object was to eat fish there to his heart's content. He carried out that object, and filled himself to repletion for nearly a month. He became unwell—his diet, as may be believed, was enough to cause this—but his illness increased so rapidly and in so strange a manner, after having for a long time seemed nothing,—that the few around him suspected poison, and sent on all sides for assistance. But the malady would not wait; it augmented rapidly with strange symptoms. Vendôme could not sign a will that was presented to him; nor a letter to the King, in which he asked that his brother might be permitted to return to Court. Everybody near flew from him and abandoned him, so that he remained in the hands of three or four of the meanest valets, whilst the rest robbed him of everything and decamped. He passed thus, the last two or three days of his life, without a priest,—no mention even had been made of one,—without other help than that of a single surgeon. The three or four valets who remained near him, seeing him at his last extremity, seized hold of the few things he still possessed, and for want of better plunder, dragged off his bed-clothes and the mattress from under him. He piteously cried to them at least not to leave him to die naked upon the bare bed. I know not whether they listened to him.

Thus died on Friday, the 10th of June, 1712, the

haughtiest of men; and the happiest, except in the latter years of his life. After having been obliged to speak of him so often, I get rid of him now, once, and for ever. He was fifty-eight years old; but in spite of the blind and prodigious favour he had enjoyed, that favour had never been able to make aught but a cabal-hero out of a captain who was a very bad general, and a man whose vices were the shame of humanity. His death restored life and joy to all Spain.

Aguilar, a friend of the Duc de Noailles, was accused of having poisoned him; but took little pains to defend himself, inasmuch as little pains were taken to substantiate the accusation. The Princesse des Ursins, who had so well profited by his life in order to increase her own greatness, did not profit less by his death. She felt her deliverance from a new Don Juan of Spain who had ceased to be supple in her hands, and who might have revived, in the course of time, all the power and authority he had formerly enjoyed in France. She was not shocked then by the joy which burst out without constraint; nor by the free talk of the Court, the city, the army, of all Spain. But in order to sustain what she had done, and cheaply pay her court to M. du Maine, Madame de Maintenon, and even to the King, she ordered that the corpse of this hideous monster of greatness and of fortune, should be carried to the Escurial. This was crowning the glory of M. de Vendôme in good earnest; for no private persons are buried in the Escurial, although several are to be found in St. Denis. But meanwhile,

until I speak of the visit I made to the Escurial—I shall do so if I live long enough to carry these memoirs up to the death of M. d'Orleans,—let me say something of that illustrious sepulchre.

The Pantheon is the place where only the bodies of Kings and Queens who have had posterity are admitted. In a separate place, near, though not on the same floor, and resembling a library, the bodies of children, and of queens who have had no posterity, are ranged. A third place, a sort of antechamber to the last named, is rightly called "the rotting room;" whilst the other improperly bears the same name. In this third room, there is nothing to be seen but four bare walls and a table in the middle. The walls being very thick, openings are made in them in which the bodies are placed. Each body has an opening to itself, which is afterwards walled up, so that nothing is seen. When it is thought that the corpse has been closed up sufficiently long to be free from odour the wall is opened, the body taken out, and put in a coffin which allows a portion of it to be seen towards the feet. This coffin is covered with a rich stuff and carried into an adjoining room.

The body of the Duc de Vendôme had been walled up nine years when I entered the Escurial. I was shown the place it occupied, smooth like every part of the four walls and without mark. I gently asked the monks who did me the honours of the place, when the body would be removed to the other chamber. They would not satisfy my curiosity, showed some indignation, and plainly intimated that this removal was not

dreamt of, and that as M. de Vendome had been so carefully walled up he might remain so!

Harlay, formerly chief president, of whom I have so often had occasion to speak, died a short time after M. de Vendome. I have already made him known. I will simply add an account of the humiliation to which this haughty cynic was reduced. He hired a house in the Rue de l'Université, with a partition wall between his garden and that of the Jacobins of the Faubourg St. Germain. The house did not belong to the Jacobins, like the houses of the Rue St. Dominique, and the Rue du Bac, which in order that they might command higher rents were put in connection with the convent garden. These mendicant Jacobins thus derive fifty thousand livres a-year. Harlay, accustomed to exercise authority, asked them for a door into their garden. He was refused. He insisted, had them spoken to, and succeeded no better. Nevertheless, the Jacobins comprehended that although this magistrate, recently so powerful, was now nothing by himself, he had a son and a cousin, Councillors of State, whom they might some day have to do with, and who for pride's sake might make themselves very disagreeable. The argument of interest is the best of all, with monks. The Jacobins changed their mind. The Prior, accompanied by some of the notabilities of the convent, went to Harlay with excuses, and said he was at liberty, if he liked, to make the door. Harlay, true to his character, looked at them askance, and replied, that he had changed his mind and would do without it. The monks much troubled by his refusal insisted; he interrupted them

and said; "Look you, my Fathers, I am grandson of Achille du Harlay, Chief President of the Parliament, who so well served the State and the Kingdom, and who for his support of the public cause, was dragged to the Bastille, where he expected to be hanged by those rascally Leaguers; it would ill become me, therefore, to enter the house, or pray to God there, of folks of the same stamp as that Jacques Clement." And he immediately turned his back upon them, leaving them confounded. This was his last act of vigour. He took it into his head afterwards to go out visiting a good deal, and as he preserved all his old unpleasant manners, he afflicted all he visited; he went even to persons who had often cooled their heels in his ante-chambers. By degrees, slight but frequent attacks of apoplexy troubled his speech, so that people had great difficulty in understanding him, and he in speaking. In this state he did not cease his visits and could not perceive that many doors were closed to him. He died in this misery, and this neglect, to the great relief of the few who by relationship were obliged to see him, above all of his son and his domestic.

On the 17th July, a truce between France and England, was published in Flanders, at the head of the troops of the two crowns. The Emperor, however, was not yet inclined for peace, and his forces under Prince Eugène continued to oppose us in Flanders, where however the tide at last turned in our favour. The King was so flattered by the overflow of joy that took place at Fontainebleau on account of our successes, that he thanked the country for it, for the first time in his

life. Prince Eugène in want of bread and of everything, raised the siege of Landrecies, which he had been conducting, and terrible desertion took place among his troops.

About this time, there was an irruption of wolves, which caused great disorders in the Orleannais; the King's wolf-hunters were sent there, and the people were authorised to take arms and make a number of grand battues.

CHAPTER V.

Settlement of the Spanish succession—Renunciation of France—Comic failure of the Duc de Berry—Anecdote of M. de Chevreuse—Father Daniel's history and its reward.

Peace was now all but concluded between France and England. There was, however, one great obstacle still in its way. Queen Anne and her Council, were stopped by the consideration, that the King of Spain would claim to succeed to the Crown of France, if the little Dauphin should die. Neither England nor any of the other powers at war, would consent to see the two principal crowns of Europe upon the same head. It was necessary then above all things to get rid of this difficulty, and so arrange the order of succession to our throne, that the case to be provided against, could never happen. Treaties, renunciations, and oaths, all of which the King had already broken, appeared feeble guarantees in the eyes of Europe. Something stronger was sought for. It could not be found; because there is nothing more sacred among men than engagements, which they consider binding on each other. What was wanting then in mere forms it was now thought could be supplied by giving to those forms the greatest possible solemnity.

It was a long time before we could get over the difficulty. The King would accord nothing except promises in order to guarantee to Europe that the two crowns should never be united upon the same head. His authority was wounded at the idea of being called upon to admit, as it were, a rival near it. Absolute without reply, as he had become, he had extinguished and absorbed even the minutest trace, idea, and recollection, of all other authority, all other power in France except that which emanated from himself alone. The English, little accustomed to such maxims, proposed that the States General should assemble in order to give weight to the renunciations to be made. They said, and with reason, that it was not enough that the King of Spain should renounce France unless France renounced Spain; and that this formality was necessary in order to break the double bonds which attached Spain to France, as France was attached to Spain. Accustomed to their parliaments, which are in effect their States General, they believed ours preserved the same authority, and they thought such authority the greatest to be obtained and the best capable of solidly supporting that of the King.

The effect of this upon the mind of a Prince almost deified in his own eyes, and habituated to the most unlimited despotism cannot be expressed. To show him that the authority of his subjects was thought necessary in order to confirm his own, wounded him in his most delicate part. The English were made to understand the weakness and the uselessness of what

they asked; for the powerlessness of our States General was explained to them, and they saw at once how vain their help would be, even if accorded.

For a long time nothing was done; France saying that a treaty of renunciation and an express confirmatory declaration of the King, registered in the Parliament, were sufficient; the English replying by reference to the fate of past treaties. Peace meanwhile was arranged with the English, and much beyond our hopes remained undisturbed.

In due time matters were so far advanced in spite of obstacles thrown in the way by the allies, that the Duc d'Aumont was sent as ambassador into England; and the Duke of Hamilton was named as ambassador for France. This last, however, losing his life in a duel with Lord Mohun, the Duke of Shrewsbury was appointed in his stead.

At the commencement of the new year [1713] the Duke and Duchess of Shrewsbury arrived in Paris. The Duchess was a great fat masculine creature, more than past the meridian, who had been beautiful and who affected to be so still; bare bosomed; her hair behind her ears; covered with rouge and patches, and full of finicking ways. All her manners were that of a mad thing, but her play, her taste, her magnificence, even her general familiarity made her the fashion. She soon declared the women's head-dresses ridicuous, as indeed they were. They were edifices of brass wire, ribbons, hair, and all sorts of tawdry rubbish more than two feet high, making women's faces seem in the middle of their bodies. The old ladies wore

the same, but made of black gauze. If they moved ever so lightly the edifice trembled and the inconvenience was extreme. The King could not endure them, but master as he was of everything was unable to banish them. They lasted for ten years and more, despite all he could say and do. What this monarch had been unable to perform, the taste and example of a silly foreigner accomplished with the most surprising rapidity. From extreme height, the ladies descended to extreme lowness, and these head-dresses, more simple, more convenient, and more becoming, last even now. Reasonable people wait with impatience for some other mad stranger who will strip our dames of these immense baskets, thoroughly insupportable to themselves and to others.

Shortly after the Duke of Shrewsbury arrived in Paris, the Hotel de Powis in London, occupied by our ambassador, the Duc d'Aumont, was burnt to the ground. A neighbouring house was pulled down to prevent others catching fire. The plate of M. d'Aumont was saved. He pretended to have lost everything else. He pretended also to have received several warnings that his house was to be burnt and himself assassinated, and that the Queen, to whom he had mentioned these warnings, offered to give him a guard. People judged otherwise in London and Paris, and felt persuaded he himself had been the incendiary in order to draw money from the King and also to conceal some monstrous smuggling operations, by which he gained enormously, and which the English had complained of ever since his arrival. This is at least

what was publicly said in the two courts and cities, and nearly everybody believed it.

But to return to the peace. The renunciations were ready towards the middle of March and were agreed upon. The King was invited to sign them by his own most pressing interest; and the Court of England to which we owed all, was not less interested in consummating this grand work, so as to enjoy, with the glory of having imposed it upon all the powers, that domestic repose which was unceasingly disturbed by the party opposed to the government, which party, excited by the enemies of peace abroad, could not cease to cause disquiet to the Queen's minister, while by delay in signing, vain hopes of disturbing the peace or hindering its ratification existed in people's minds. The king of Spain had made his renunciations with all the solidity and solemnity which could be desired from the laws, customs, and usages of Spain. It only remained for France to imitate him.

For the ceremony that was to take place all that could be obtained in order to render it more solemn was the presence of the peers. But the king was so jealous of his authority, and so little inclined to pay attention to that of others, that he wished to content himself with merely saying in a general way that he hoped to find all the peers at the Parliament when the renunciations were made. I told M. d'Orleans that if the King thought such an announcement as this was enough, he might rely upon finding not a single peer at the Parliament. I added, that if the King did not himself invite each peer, the master of the ceremonies

ought to do so for him, according to the custom always followed. This warning had its effect. We all received written invitations immediately. Wednesday, the 18th of May, was fixed for the ceremony.

At six o'clock on the morning of that day I went to the apartments of M. le Duc de Berry, in parliamentary dress, and shortly afterwards M. d'Orleans came there also, with a grand suite. It had been arranged that the ceremony was to commence by a compliment from the Chief President de Mesmes to M. le Duc de Berry, who was to reply to it. He was much troubled at this. Madame de St. Simon, to whom he unbosomed himself, found means, through a subaltern, to obtain the discourse of the Chief President, and gave it to M. le Duc de Berry, to regulate his reply by. This, however, seemed too much for him; he admitted so to Madam de St. Simon, and that he knew not what to do. She proposed that I should take the work off his hands; and he was delighted with the expedient. I wrote, therefore, a page and a half full of common-sized paper in an ordinary handwriting. M. le Duc de Berry liked it, but thought it too long to be learnt. I abridged it; he wished it to be still shorter, so that at last there was not more than three quarters of a page. He had learned it by heart, and repeated it in his cabinet the night before the ceremony to Madame de St. Simon, who encouraged him as much as she could.

At about half-past six o'clock we set out—M. le Duc d'Orleans, M. le Duc de Berry, myself, and M. le Duc de Saint Aignan, in one coach, several other coaches following. M. le Duc de Berry was very silent all the

journey, appearing to be much occupied with the speech he had learned by heart. M. d'Orleans, on the contrary, was full of gaiety, and related some of his youthful adventures, and of his wild doings by night in the streets of Paris. We arrived gently at the Porte de la Conference, that is to say—for it is now pulled down—at the end of the terrace, and of the Quai of the Tuileries.

We found there the trumpeters and drummers of M. le Duc de Berry's guard, who made a great noise all the rest of our journey, which ended at the Palais de Justice. Thence we went to the Sainte Chapelle to hear Mass. The Chapelle was filled with company, among which were many people of quality. The crowd of people from this building to the grand chamber was so great that a pin could not have fallen to the ground. On all sides, too, folks had climbed up to see what passed.

All the princes of the blood, the bastards, the peers, and the parliament, were assembled in the palace. When M. le Duc de Berry entered, every thing was ready. Silence having with difficulty been obtained, the Chief President paid his compliment to the Prince. When he had finished, it was for M. le Duc de Berry to reply. He half took off his hat, immediately put it back again, looked at the Chief President, and said, "Monsieur;" after a moment's pause he repeated—"Monsieur." Then he looked at the assembly, and again said, "Monsieur." Afterwards he turned towards M. d'Orleans, who, like himself, was as red as fire, next to the Chief President, and finally stopped short,

nothing else than "Monsieur" having been able to issue from his mouth.

I saw distinctly the confusion of M le Duc de Berry, and sweated at it; but what could be done? The Duc turned again towards M. d'Orleans, who lowered his head. Both were dismayed. At last the Chief President, seeing there was no other resource, finished this cruel scene, by taking off his cap to M. le Duc de Berry, and inclining himself very low, as if the response was finished. Immediately afterwards he told the King's people to begin. The embarrassment of all the courtiers, and the surprise of the magistracy may be imagined!

The renunciations were then read; and by these the King of Spain and his posterity gave up all claim to succeed to the throne of France, and M. le Duc d'Orleans, and M. le Duc de Berry to succeed to that of Spain. These and other forms occupied a long time. The Chamber all the while was crowded to excess. There was not room for a single other person to enter. It was very late when all was over.

When everything was at an end M. de St. Aignan and I accompanied M. le Duc de Berry and M. le Duc d'Orleans in a coach to the Palais Royal. On the way the conversation was very quiet. M. le Duc de Berry appeared dispirited, embarrassed, and vexed. Even after we had partaken of a splendid and delicate dinner, to which an immense number of other guests sat down, he did not improve. We were conducted to the Porte St. Honoré with the same pomp as that in the midst of which we had entered Paris. During the rest of the

journey to Versailles M. le Duc de Berry was as silent as ever.

To add to his vexation, as soon as he arrived at Versailles the Princesse de Montauban, without knowing a word of what had passed, set herself to exclaim, with her usual flattery, that she was charmed with the grace and the appropriate eloquence with which he had spoken at the Parliament, and paraphrased this theme with all the praises of which it was susceptible. M. le Duc de Berry blushed with vexation without saying a word ; she recommenced extolling his modesty, he blushing the more, and saying nothing. When at last he had got rid of her, he went to his own apartments, said not a word to the persons he found there, scarcely one to Madame his wife, but taking Madame de Saint Simon with him, went into his library, and shut himself up alone there with her.

Throwing himself into an arm chair he cried out that he was dishonoured, and wept scalding tears. Then he related to Madame de Saint Simon, in the midst of sobs, how he had stuck fast at the Parliament, without being able to utter a word, said that he should everywhere be regarded as an ass and a blockhead, and repeated the compliments he had received from Madame de Montauban, who, he said, had laughed at and insulted him, knowing well what had happened; then, infuriated against her to the last degree, he called her by all sorts of names. Madame de St. Simon spared no exertion in order to calm M. de Berry, assuring him that it was impossible Madame de Montauban could know what had taken place at the Parliament,

the news not having then reached Versailles, and that she had had no other object than flattery in addressing him. Nothing availed. Complaints and silence succeeded each other in the midst of tears. Then, suddenly falling upon the Duc de Beauvilliers and the King, and accusing the defects of his education: "They thought only," he exclaimed, "of making me stupid, and of stifling all my powers. I was a younger son. I coped with my brother. They feared the consequences; they annihilated me. I was taught only to play and to hunt, and they have succeeded in making me a fool and an ass, incapable of anything, the laughing-stock and disdain of everybody." Madame de St. Simon was overpowered with compassion, and did everything to calm M. de Berry. Their strange tête-à-tête lasted nearly two hours, and resumed the next day, but with less violence. By degrees M. le Duc de Berry became consoled, but never afterwards did any one dare to speak to him of his misadventure at the peace ceremony.

Let me here say that, the ceremony over, peace was signed at Utrecht on the 10th April, 1713, at a late hour of the night. It was published in Paris with great solemnity on the 22nd. Monsieur and Madame du Maine, who wished to render themselves popular, came from Sceaux to see the ceremony in the Place Royale, showed themselves on a balcony to the people to whom they threw some money—a liberality that the King would not have permitted in anybody else. At night fires were lighted before the houses, several of which were illuminated. On the 25th a Te Deum was sung

at Notre Dame, and in the evening there was a grand display of fireworks at the Grève, which was followed by a superb banquet given at the Hôtel de Ville by the Duc de Tresmes, Governor of Paris, to a large number of distinguished persons of both sexes, of the Court and the city, the twenty-four violins playing during the repast.

I have omitted to mention the death of M. de Chevreuse, which took place between seven and eight o'clock in the morning on Saturday, the 5th of November, of the previous year (1712). I have so often alluded to M. de Chevreuse in the course of these pages, that I will content myself with relating here two anecdotes of him, which serve to paint a part of his character.

He was very forgetful, and adventures often happened to him in consequence, which diverted us amazingly. Sometimes his horses were put to and kept waiting for him twelve or fifteen hours at a time. Upon one occasion in summer this happened at Vaucresson, whence he was going to dine at Dampierre. The coachman, first, then the postilion, grew tired of looking after the horses and left them. Towards six o'clock at night the horses themselves were in their turn worn out, bolted, and a din was heard which shook the house. Everybody ran out, the coach was found smashed, the large door shivered in pieces; the garden railings, which enclosed both sides of the court, broken down; the gates in pieces; in short damage was done that took a long time to repair. M. de Chevreuse, who had not been disturbed by this uproar even for an instant, was quite

astonished when he heard of it. M. de Beauvilliers amused himself for a long time by reproaching him with it, and by asking the expense.

Another adventure happened to him also at Vaucresson, and covered him with real confusion, comical to see, every time it was mentioned. About ten o'clock one morning a M. Sconin, who had formerly been his steward, was announced. "Let him take a turn in the garden," said M. de Chevreuse, "and come back in half an hour." He continued what he was doing, and completely forgot his man. Towards seven o'clock in the evening Sconin was again announced. "In a moment," replied M. de Chevreuse, without disturbing himself. A quarter of an hour afterwards he called Sconin, and admitted him. "Ah, my poor Sconin," said he, "I must offer you a thousand excuses for having caused you to lose your day."

"Not at all, Monseigneur," replied Sconin. "As I have had the honour of knowing you for many years, I comprehended this morning that the half hour might be long, so I went to Paris, did some business there, before and after dinner, and here I am again."

M. de Chevreuse was confounded. Sconin did not keep silence, nor did the servants of the house. M. de Beauvilliers made merry with the adventure when he heard of it, and accustomed as M. de Chevreuse might be to his raillery, he could not bear to have this subject alluded to. I have selected two anecdotes out of a hundred others of the same kind, because they characterise the man.

The liberality of M. du Maine which we have related on the occasion of the proclamation of peace at Paris, and which was so popular, and so surprising when viewed in connection with the disposition of the King, soon took new development. The Jesuits, so skilful in detecting the foibles of monarchs, and so clever in seizing hold of everything which can protect themselves and answer their ends, showed to what extent they were masters of these arts. A new and assuredly a very original History of France, in three large folio volumes, appeared under the name of Father Daniel, who lived at Paris in the establishment of the Jesuits. The paper and the printing of the work were excellent; the style was admirable. Never was French so clear, so pure, so flowing, with such happy transitions; in a word, everything to charm and entice the reader; admirable preface, magnificent promises, short, learned dissertations, a pomp, an authority of the most seductive kind. As for the history, there was much romance in the first race, much in the second, and much mistiness in the early times of the third. In a word, all the work evidently appeared composed in order to persuade people—under the simple air of a man who set aside prejudices with discernment, and who only seeks the truth—that the majority of the Kings of the first race, several of the second, some, even of the third, were bastards, whom this defect did not exclude from the throne, or affect in any way.

I say bluntly here what was very delicately veiled in the work, and yet plainly seen. The effect of the book was great; its vogue such, that everybody, even women,

asked for it. The King spoke of it to several of his Court, and asked if they had read it; the most sagacious early saw how much it was protected; it was the sole historical book the King and Madame de Maintenon had ever spoken of. Thus the work appeared at Versailles upon every table, nothing else was talked about, marvellous eulogies were lavished upon it, which were sometimes comical in the mouths of persons either very ignorant, or who, incapable of reading, pretended to read and relish this book.

But this surprising success did not last. People perceived that this history, which so cleverly unravelled the remote part, gave but a meagre account of modern days, except in so far as their military operations were concerned, of which even the minutest details were recorded. Of negociations, cabals, Court intrigues, portraits, elevations, falls, and the main springs of events, there was not a word in all the work, except briefly, drily, and with precision as in the gazettes, often more superficially. Upon legal matters, public ceremonies, fêtes of different times, there was also silence at the best, the same laconism; and when we come to the affairs of Rome and of the League, it is a pleasure to see the author glide over that dangerous ice on his Jesuit skates!

In due time critics condemned the work which, after so much applause, was recognised as a very wretched history, which had very industriously and very fraudulently answered the purpose for which it was written. It fell to the ground then; learned men wrote against it; but the principal and delicate point

of the work was scarcely touched in France with the pen, so great was the danger.

Father Daniel obtained two thousand francs pension for his history,—a prodigious recompense,—with the title of Historiographer of France. He enjoyed the fruits of his falsehood, and laughed at those who attacked him. Foreign countries did not swallow quite so readily these stories that declared such a number of our early Kings bastards; but great care was taken not to let France be infected by the disagreeable truths therein published.

CHAPTER VI.

The Bull *Unigenitus*—My interview with Father Tellier—Curious inadvertence of mine—Peace—Duc de la Rochefoucauld—A suicide in public—Charmel—Two gay sisters.

It is now time that I should say something of the infamous bull *Unigenitus*, which by the unsurpassed audacity and scheming of Father Le Tellier and his friends was forced upon the Pope and the world.

I need not enter into a very lengthy account of the celebrated Papal decree which has made so many martyrs, depopulated our schools, introduced ignorance, fanaticism, and misrule, rewarded vice, thrown the whole community into the greatest confusion, caused disorder everywhere, and established the most arbitrary and the most barbarous inquisition; evils which have doubled within the last thirty years. I will content myself with a word or two, and will not blacken further the pages of my Memoirs. Many pens have been occupied, and will be occupied with this subject. It is not the apostleship of Jesus Christ that is in question, but that of the reverend fathers and their ambitious clients.

It is enough to say that the new bull condemned in set terms the doctrines of St. Paul (respected like

oracles of the Holy Spirit ever since the time of our Saviour), and also those of St. Augustin, and of other fathers; doctrines which have always been adopted by the Popes, by the Councils, and by the Church itself. The bull, as soon as published, met with a violent opposition in Rome from the cardinals there, who went by sixes, by eights, and by tens, to complain of it to the Pope. They might well do so, for they had not been consulted in any way upon this new constitution. Father Tellier and his friends had had the art and the audacity to obtain the publication of it without submitting it to them. The Pope, as I have said, had been forced into acquiescence, and now, all confused, knew not what to say. He protested, however, that the publication had been made without his knowledge, and put off the cardinals with compliments, excuses, and tears, which last he could always command.

The constitution had the same fate in France as in Rome. The cry against it was universal. The cardinals protested that it would never be received. They were shocked by its condemnation of the doctrines of St. Augustin and of the other fathers; terrified at its condemnation of St. Paul. There were not two opinions upon this terrible constitution. The Court, the city, and the provinces, as soon as they knew the nature of it, rose against it like one man.

In addition to the articles of this constitution which I have already named, there was one which excited infinite alarm and indignation, for it rendered the Pope master of every crown! As is well known, there is a doctrine of the church, which says :—

An unjust excommunication ought not to hinder [*us*] *from doing our duty.*

The new constitution condemned this doctrine, and consequently proclaimed that—

An unjust excommunication ought to hinder [*us*] *from doing our duty.*

The enormity of this last is more striking than the simple truth of the proposition condemned. The second is a shadow which better throws up the light of the first. The results and the frightful consequences of the condemnation are as clear as day.

I think I have before said that Father Tellier, without any advances on my part, without, in fact, encouragement of any kind, insisted upon keeping up an intimacy with me, which I could not well repel, for it came from a man whom it would have been very dangerous indeed to have for an enemy. As soon as this matter of the constitution was in the wind, he came to me to talk about it. I did not disguise my opinion from him, nor did he disguise in any way from me the unscrupulous means he meant to employ in order to get this bull accepted by the clergy. Indeed, he was so free with me, showed me so plainly his knavery and cunning, that I was, as it were, transformed with astonishment and fright. I never could comprehend this openness in a man so false, so artificial, so profound, or see in what manner it could be useful to him.

One day he came to me by appointment, with a copy of the constitution in his hand in order that we might thoroughly discuss it. I was at Versailles. In

order to understand what I am going to relate, I must give some account of my apartments there. Let me say, then, that I had a little back-cabinet, leading out of another cabinet, but so arranged that you would not have thought it was there. It received no light except from the outer cabinet, its own windows being boarded up. In this back cabinet I had a bureau, some chairs, books, and all I needed; my friends called it "my shop," and in truth it did not ill resemble one.

Father Tellier came at the hour he had fixed. As chance would have it, M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse de Berry had invited themselves to a collation with Madame de St. Simon that morning. I knew that when they arrived I should no longer be master of my chamber or of my cabinet. I told Father Tellier this, and he was much vexed. He begged me so hard to find some place where we might be inaccessible to the company, that at last, pressed by him to excess, I said I knew of only one expedient by which we might become free: and I told him that he must dismiss his *vatblé* (as the brother who always accompanies a monk is called), and that then, furnished with candles, we would go and shut ourselves up in my back cabinet, where we could not neither be seen nor heard, if we took care not to speak loud when anybody approached. He thought the expedient admirable, dismissed his companion, and we sat down opposite each other, the bureau between us, with two candles alight upon it.

He immediately began to sing the praises of the

Constitution Unigenitus, a copy of which he placed on the table. I interrupted him so as to come at once to the *excommunication* proposition. We discussed it with much politeness but with little accord. I shall not pretend to report our dispute. It was warm and long. I pointed out to Father Tellier, that supposing the King and the little Dauphin were both to die, and this was a misfortune which might happen, the crown of France would by right of birth belong to the King of Spain; but according to the renunciation just made, it would belong to M. le Duc de Berry and his branch, or in default to M. le Duc d'Orleans. "Now," said I "if the two brothers dispute the crown and the Pope favouring the one should excommunicate the other, it follows, according to your new constitution, that the excommunicated must abandon all his claims, all his partisans, all his forces, and go over to the other side. For you say, *an unjust excommunication ought to hinder us from doing our duty.* So that in one fashion or another the Pope is master of all the crowns in his communion, is at liberty to take them away or to give them as he pleases, a liberty so many Popes have claimed and so many have tried to put in action."

My argument was simple, applicable, natural, and pressing: it offered itself, of itself. Therefore, the confessor was amazed by it; he blushed, he beat about the bush, he could not collect himself. By degrees he did so, and replied to me in a manner that he doubtless thought would convince me at once. "If the case you suggest were to happen," said he, "and the Pope declaring for one disputant were to excom-

municate the other and all his followers, such excommunication would not merely be *unjust* it would be *false;* and it has never been decided that a *false* excommunication should hinder us from doing our duty."

"Ah! my father," I said, "your distinction is subtle and clever I admit. I admit, too, I did not expect it, but permit me some few more objections, I beseech you. Will the ultramontanes admit the nullity of the excommunication? Is it not null as soon as it is unjust? If the Pope has the power to excommunicate unjustly and to enforce obedience to his excommunication, who can limit power so unlimited and why should not his *false* (or nullified) excommunication be as much obeyed and respected as his *unjust* excommunication? Suppose the case I have imagined were to happen. Suppose the Pope were to excommunicate one of the two brothers. Do you think it would be easy to make your subtle distinction between a false and an unjust excommunication understood by the people, the soldiers, the bourgeois, the officers, the lords, the women, at the very moment when they would be preparing to act and to take up arms? You see I point out great inconveniences that may arise if the new doctrine be accepted, and if the Pope should claim the power of deposing kings, disposing of their crowns and releasing their subjects from the oath of fidelity in opposition to the formal words of Jesus Christ and of all the scripture."

My words transported the Jesuit, for I had touched the right spring in spite of his effort to hide it. He

said nothing personal to me, but he fumed. The more he restrained himself for me the less he did so for the matter in hand. As though to indemnify himself for his moderation on my account, he launched out the more, upon the subject we were discussing. In his heat, no longer master of himself, many things escaped him, silence upon which I am sure he would afterwards have bought very dearly. He told me so many things of the violence that would be used to make his constitution accepted, things so monstrous, so atrocious, so terrible, and with such extreme passion that I fell into a veritable syncope. I saw him right in front of me between two candles, only the width of the table between us (I have described elsewhere his horrible physiognomy). My hearing and my sight became bewildered. I was seized, while he was speaking, with the full idea of what a Jesuit was. Here was a man who by his state and his vows, could hope for nothing for his family or for himself, who could not expect an apple or a glass of wine more than his brethren; who was approaching an age when he would have to render account of all things to God, and who with studied deliberation and mighty artifice was going to throw the state and religion into the most terrible flames, and commence a most frightful persecution for questions which affected him in nothing, nor touched in any way the honour of the School of Molina!

His profundities, the violence he spoke of—all this together, threw me into such an ecstacy, that suddenly I interrupted him by saying:

"My father, how old are you?"

The extreme surprise which painted itself upon his face as I looked at him with all my eyes, fetched back my senses, and his reply brought me completely to myself. "Why do you ask?" he replied, smiling. The effort that I made over myself to escape such a unique *proposito,* the terrible value of which I fully appreciated, furnished me an issue. "Because," said I, "never have I looked at you so long as I have now, you in front of me, these two candles between us, and your face is so fresh and so healthy, with all your labours, that I am surprised at it."

He swallowed the answer, or so well pretended to do so, that he said nothing of it then nor since, never ceasing when he met me to speak to me as openly, and as frequently as before, I seeking him as little as ever. He replied at that time that he was seventy-four years old, that in truth he was very well; that he had accustomed himself, from his earliest years, to a hard life and to labour; and then went back to the point at which I had interrupted him. We were compelled, however, to be silent for a time, because people came into my cabinet, and Madame de St. Simon, who knew of our interview, had some difficulty to keep the coast clear.

For more than two hours we continued our discussion, he trying to put me off with his subtleties and authoritativeness, I offering but little opposition to him, feeling that opposition was of no use, all his plans being already decided. We separated without having persuaded each other, he with many flatteries upon my intelligence, praying me to reflect well upon the matter;

I replying that my reflections were all made, and that my capacity could not go farther. I let him out by the little back door of my cabinet, so that nobody perceived him, and as soon as I had closed it, I threw myself into a chair like a man out of breath, and I remained there a long time alone, reflecting upon the strange kind of ecstacy I had been in and the horror it had caused me.

The results of this *constitution* were, as I have said, terrible to the last degree; every artifice, every cruelty was used, in order to force it down the throats of the clergy, and hence the confusion and sore trouble which arose all over the realm. But it is time now for me to touch upon other matters.

Towards the close of this year, 1713, peace with the Emperor seemed so certain, that the King disbanded sixty battalions and eighteen men per company of the regiment of the guards, and one hundred and six squadrons; of which squadrons twenty-seven were dragoons. At peace now with the rest of Europe he had no need of so many troops, even although the war against the Empire had continued; fortunately, however, it did not. Negotiations were set on foot, and on the 6th of March of the following year, 1714, after much debate, they ended successfully. On that day, in fact, peace was signed at Rastadt. It was shortly afterwards published at Paris, a Te Deum sung, and bonfires lighted at night; a grand collation was given at the Hôtel de Ville by the Duc de Tresmes, who at midnight also gave, in his own house, a splendid banquet, at which were present many ladies, foreigners, and courtiers.

This winter was fertile in balls at the Court; there were several, fancy-dress and masked, given by M. le Duc de Berry, by Madame la Duchesse de Berry, M. le Duc, and others. There were some also at Paris, and at Sceaux, where Madame du Maine gave many fêtes and played many comedies, everybody going there from Paris, and the Court,—M. du Maine doing the honours. Madame la Duchesse de Berry was in the family way, and went to no dances out of her own house. The King permitted her, on account of her condition, to sup with him in a *robe de chambre*, as under similar circumstances he had permitted the two Dauphines to do.

At the opera, one night this winter, the Abbé Servien not liking certain praises of the King, contained in a Prologue, let slip a bitter joke in ridicule of them. The pit took it up, repeated it, and applauded it. Two days afterwards, the Abbé Servien was arrested and taken to Vincennes, forbidden to speak to anybody, and allowed no servant to wait upon him. For form's sake seals were put upon his papers, but he was not a man likely to have any fit for aught else than to light the fire. Though more than sixty-five years old, he was strangely debauched.

The Duc de la Rochefoucauld died on Thursday the 11th of January, at Versailles, seventy-nine years of age, and blind. I have spoken of him so frequently in the course of these memoirs, that I will do nothing more now than relate a few particulars respecting him, which will serve in some sort to form his portrait.

He had much honour, worth, and probity. He was

noble, good, magnificent, ever willing to serve his friends; a little too much so, for he oftentimes wearied the King with importunities on their behalf. Without any intellect or discernment he was proud to excess, coarse and rough in his manners—disagreeable even, and embarrassed with all except his flatterers; like a man who does not know how to receive a visit, enter or leave a room. He scarcely went anywhere except to pay the indispensable compliments demanded by marriage, death, &c., and even then as little as he could. He lived in his own house so shut up that no one went to see him except on these same occasions. He gave himself up almost entirely to his valets, who mixed themselves in the conversation; and you were obliged to treat them with all sorts of attentions, if you wished to become a frequenter of the house.

I shall never forget what happened to us at the death of the Prince of Vaudemont's son, by which M. de la Rochefoucauld's family came in for a good inheritance. We were at Marly. The King had been stag-hunting. M. de Chevreuse, whom I found when the King was being unbooted, proposed that we should go and pay our compliments to M. de la Rochefoucauld. We went. Upon entering, what was our surprise, nay, our shame, to find M. de la Rochefoucauld playing at chess with one of his servants in livery, seated opposite to him! Speech failed us. M. de la Rochefoucauld perceived it, and remained confounded himself. He stammered, he grew confused, he tried to excuse what we had seen, saying that this lackey played very well, and that chess-players played with everybody. M. de Chevreuse

had not come to contradict him, neither had I; we turned the conversation, therefore, and left as soon as possible. As soon as we were outside we opened our minds to each other, and said what we thought of this rare meeting, which, however, we did not make public.

M. de la Rochefoucauld, towards the end of his career at Court, became so importunate, as I have said, for his friends, that the King was much relieved by his death. Such have been his sentiments at the death of nearly all those whom he had liked and favoured.

Of the courage of M. de la Rochefoucauld, courtier as he was in speaking to the King, I will relate an instance. It was during one of the visits at Marly, in the gardens of which the King was amusing himself with a fountain that he set at work. I know not what led to it, but the King, usually so reserved, spoke with him of the bishop of Saint-Pons, then in disgrace on account of the affairs of Port Royal. M. de la Rochefoucauld let him speak on to the end, and then began to praise the bishop. The discouraging silence of the King warned him; he persisted, however, and related how the bishop, mounted upon a mule, and visiting one day his diocese, found himself in a path which grew narrower at every step, and which ended in a precipice. There were no means of getting out of it except by going back, but this was impossible, there not being enough space to turn round or to alight. The holy bishop (for such was his term as I well remarked) lifted his eyes to Heaven, let go the bridle, and abandoned himself to Providence. Immediately his mule rose up upon its hind legs, and thus upright,

the bishop still astride, turned round until its head was where its tail had been. The beast thereupon returned along the path until it found an opening into a good road. Everybody around the King imitated his silence, which excited the Duc to comment upon what he had just related. This generosity charmed me, and surprised all who were witness of it.

The day after the death of M. de la Rochefoucauld, the Chancellor took part in a very tragic scene. A Vice-bailli of Alençon had just lost a trial, in which, apparently, his honour, or his property, was much interested. He came to Pontchartrain's where the Chancellor was at the moment, and waited until he came out into the court to get into his carriage. The Vice-bailli then asked him for a revision of the verdict. The Chancellor with much gentleness and goodness, represented to the man that the law courts were open to him if he insisted to appeal, but that as to a revision of the verdict, it was contrary to usage: and turned to get into his coach. While he was getting in, the unhappy bailli said there was a shorter way of escaping from trouble, and stabbed himself twice with a poignard. At the cries of the domestics the Chancellor descended from the coach, had the man carried into a room, and sent for a doctor, and a confessor. The bailli made confession very peacefully, and died an hour afterwards.

I have spoken in its time of the exile of Charmel and its causes, of which the chief was his obstinate refusal to present himself before the King. The vexation of the King against people who withdrew from him was

always very great. In this case, it never passed away, but hardened into a strange cruelty, to speak within limits. Charmel attacked with the stone asked permission to come to Paris to undergo an operation. The permission was positively refused. Time pressed. The operation was obliged to be done in the country. It was so severe, and perhaps so badly done, that Charmel died three days afterwards full of penitence and piety. He had led a life remarkable for its goodness, was without education, but had religious fervour that supplied the want of it. He was sixty-eight years of age.

The Maréchale de la Ferté died at Paris, at the same time, more than eighty years old. She was sister of the Comtesse d'Olonne, very rich and a widow. The beauty of the two sisters, and the excesses of their lives, made a great stir. No women, not even those most stigmatised for their gallantry, dared to see them, or to be seen anywhere with them. That was the way then; the fashion has changed since. When they were old and nobody cared for them, they tried to become devout. They lodged together, and one Ash-Wednesday went and heard a sermon. This sermon, which was upon fasting and the penitence, terrified them.

"My sister," they said to each other on their return, "it was all true; there was no joke about it; we must do penance, or we are lost. But my sister what shall we do?" After having well turned it over: "My sister," said Madame d'Olonne, "this is what we must do: we must make our servants fast." Madame

d'Olonne thought she had very well met the difficulty. However at last, she set herself to work in earnest, at piety and penitence, and died three months after her sister, the Marechale de la Ferté. It will not be forgotten, that it was under cover of the Marechale that a natural child was first legitimated without naming the mother, in order that by this example, the King's natural children might be similarly honoured, without naming Madame de Montespan, as I have related in its place.

CHAPTER VII.

The King of Spain a widower—Intrigues of Madame des Ursins—Choice of the Princess of Parma—The King of France kept in the dark—Celebration of the marriage—Sudden fall of the Princesse des Ursins—Her expulsion from Spain.

The Queen of Spain, for a long time violently attacked with the King's Evil around the face and neck, was just now at the point of death. Obtaining no relief from the Spanish doctors, she wished to have Helvetius, and begged the King by an express command to send him to her. Helvetius much inconvenienced, and knowing besides the condition of the princess, did not wish to go, but the King expressly commanded him. He set out then in a post-chaise, followed by another in case his own should break down, and arrived thus at Madrid on the 11th of February, 1714. As soon as he had seen the Queen, he said there was nothing but a miracle could save her. The King of Spain did not discontinue sleeping with her until the 9th. On the 14th she died, with much courage, consciousness, and piety.

Despair was general in Spain, where this Queen was universally adored. There was not a family which did not lament her, not a person who has since been consoled. The King of Spain was extremely touched,

but somewhat in a royal manner. Thus, when, out shooting one day, he came close to the convoy by which the body of his Queen was being conveyed to the Escurial; he looked at it, followed it with his eyes, and continued his sport! Are these princes made like other human beings?

The death of the Queen led to amazing changes, such as the most prophetic could not have foreseen. Let me here, then, relate the events that followed this misfortune.

I must commence by saying, that the principal cause which had so long and scandalously hindered us from making peace with the Emperor, was a condition, which Madame des Ursins wished to insert in the treaty, (and which the King of Spain supported through thick and thin) to the effect that she should be invested with a *bonâ fide* sovereignty. She had set her heart upon this, and the King of Spain was a long time before he would consent to any terms of peace that did not concede it to her. It was not until the King had uttered threats against him that he would give way. As for Madame des Ursins, she had counted upon this sovereingty with as much certainty as though it were already between her fingers. She had counted too, with equal certainty upon exchanging it with our King, for the sovereignty of Touraine and the Amboise country; and had actually charged her faithful Aubigny to buy her some land near Amboise to build her there, a vast palace, with courts and out-buildings; to furnish it with magnificence, to spare neither gilding nor paintings, and to surround the whole with

the most beautiful gardens. She meant to live there as sovereign lady of the country. Aubigny had at once set about the work to the surprise of everybody: for no one could imagine for whom such a grand building could be designed. He kept the secret, pretended he was building a house for himself, and pushed on the works so rapidly that just as peace was concluded without the stipulation respecting Madame des Ursins being inserted in the treaty, nearly all was finished. Her sovereignty scheme thoroughly failed; and to finish at once with that mad idea, I may as well state, that ashamed of her failure, she gave this palace to Aubigny, who lived there all the rest of his life: Chanteloup, for so it is called, has since passed into the hands of Madame d'Armantièrès, his daughter. It is one of the most beautiful and most singular places in all France, and the most superbly furnished.

This sovereignty, coveted by Madame des Ursins, exceedingly offended Madame de Maintenon and wounded her pride. She felt, with jealousy, that the grand airs Madame des Ursins gave herself were solely the effect of the protection she had accorded her. She could not bear to be outstripped in importance by the woman she herself had elevated. The King, too, was much vexed with Madame des Ursins; vexed also to see peace delayed; and to be obliged to speak with authority and menace to the King of Spain, in order to compel him to give up the idea of this precious sovereignty. The King of Spain did not yield until he was threatened with abandonment by France. It may be imagined what was the rage of Madame des

Ursins upon missing her mark after having, before the eyes of all Europe, fired at it with so much perseverance, nay with such unmeasured obstinacy. From this time there was no longer the same concert between Madame de Maintenon and Madame des Ursins that had formerly existed. But the latter had reached such a point in Spain, that she thought this was of no consequence.

It has been seen with what art Madame des Ursins had unceasingly isolated the King of Spain; in what manner she had shut him up with the Queen, and rendered him inaccessible, not only to his Court but to his grand officers, his ministers, even his valets, so that he was served by only three or four attendants, all French, and entirely under her thumb. At the death of the Queen this solitude continued. Under the pretext that his grief demanded privacy, she persuaded the King to leave his palace and to instal himself in a quiet retreat, the Palace of Medina-Celi, near the Buen-Retiro, at the other end of the city. She preferred this because it was infinitely smaller than the Royal Palace, and because few people, in consequence, could approach the King. She herself took the Queen's place; and in order to have a sort of pretext for being near the King, in the same solitude, she caused herself to be named governess of his children. But in order to be always there, and so that nobody should know when they were together, she had a large wooden corridor made from the cabinet of the King to the apartment of his children, in which she lodged. By this means they could pass from one to

the other without being perceived, and without traversing the long suite of rooms, filled with courtiers, that were between the two apartments. In this manner it was never known whether the King was alone or with Madame des Ursins; or which of the two was in the apartments of the other. When they were together or how long is equally unknown. This corridor, roofed and glazed, was proceeded with in so much haste, that the work went on, in spite of the King's devotion, on fête days and Sundays. The whole Court, which perfectly well knew for what use this corridor was intended, was much displeased. Those who directed the works were the same. Of this good proof was given. One day, the Comptroller of the royal buildings, who had been ordered to keep the men hard at it, Sundays and fête days, asked the Père Robinet, the King's confessor, and the only good one he ever had; he asked, I say, in one of those rooms Madame des Ursins was so anxious to avoid, and in the presence of various courtiers, if the work was to be continued on the morrow, a Sunday, and the next day, the Fête of the Virgin. Robinet replied, that the King had said nothing to the contrary; and met a second appeal with the same answer. At the third, he added, that before saying anything he would wait till the King spoke on the subject. At the fourth appeal he lost patience, and said that if for the purpose of destroying what had been commenced, he believed work might be done even on Easter-day itself; but if for the purpose of continuing the corridor, he did not think a Sunday or a fête day was a fitting time. All the Court

applauded; but Madame des Ursins, to whom this sally was soon carried, was much irritated.

It was suspected that she thought of becoming something more than the mere companion of the King. There were several princes. Reports were spread which appeared equivocal and which terrified. It was said that the King had no need of posterity, with all the children it had pleased God to bless him with; but now he only needed a wife who could take charge of those children. Not content with passing all her days with the King, and allowing him, like the deceased Queen, to work with his ministers only in her presence, the Princesse des Ursins felt that to render this habit lasting she must assure herself of him at all moments. He was accustomed to take the air, and he was in want of it all the more now because he had been much shut up during the last days of the Queen's illness, and the first which followed her death. Madame des Ursins chose four or five gentlemen to accompany him, to the exclusion of all others, even his chief officers, and people still more necessary. These gentlemen, charged with the amusement of the King, were called *recreadores*. With so much circumspection, importunity, preparation, and rumour carefully circulated, it was not doubted that Madame des Ursins intended to marry him; and the opinion, as well as the fear, became general. The King (Louis XIV.), was infinitely alarmed; and Madame de Maintenon, who had twice tried to be proclaimed Queen and twice failed, was distracted with jealousy. Howevever, if Madame des Ursins flattered herself then, it was not for long.

The King of Spain, always curious to learn the news from France, often demanded them of his confessor, the only man to whom he could speak who was not under the thumb of Madame des Ursins. The clever and courageous Robinet, as disturbed as others at the progress of the design, which nobody in the two Courts of France and Spain doubted was in execution, allowed himself to be pressed by questions—in an embrasure where the King had drawn him—played the reserved and the mysterious in order to excite curiosity more. When he saw it was sufficiently excited, he said that since he was forced to speak, his news from France was the same as that at Madrid, where no one doubted that the King would do the Princesse des Ursins the honour to espouse her. The King blushed and hastily replied, "Marry her! oh no! not that!" and quitted him.

Whether the Princess des Ursins was informed of this sharp repartee, or whether she despaired already of success, she changed about; and judging that this interregnum in the Palace of Medina-Celi could not last for ever, resolved to assure herself of the King by a Queen who should owe to her such a grand marriage, and who, having no other support, would throw herself into her arms by gratitude and necessity. With this view she explained herself to Alberoni, who, since the death of the Duc de Vendôme, had remained at Madrid charged with the affairs of Parma; and proposed to him the marriage of the Princess of Parma, daughter of the Duchess and of the late Duke of Parma, who had married the widow of his brother.

Alberoni could with difficulty believe his ears. An alliance so disproportioned appeared to him so much the more incredible, because he thought the Court of France would never consent to it, and that without its consent the marriage could not be concluded. The Princess in question was the issue of double illegitimacy; by her father descended from a pope, by her mother from a natural daughter of Charles Quint. She was daughter of a petty Duke of Parma, and of a mother, entirely Austrian, sister of the Dowager Empress and of the Dowager Queen of Spain (whose acts had excited such disapproval that she was sent from her exile at Toledo to Bayonne), sister too of the Queen of Portugal, who had induced the King, her husband, to receive the Archduke at Lisbon and to carry the war into Spain. It did not seem reasonable, therefore, that such a Princess would be accepted as a wife for the King of Spain.

Nothing of all this however stopped the Princess des Ursins; her own interest was the most pressing consideration with her; the will of the King of Spain was entirely subject to her; she felt all the change towards her of our King and of Madame de Maintenon; she no longer hoped for a return of their favour; she believed that she must look around for support against the very authority which had established her so powerfully, and which could destroy her; and occupied herself solely in pushing forward a marriage from which she expected everything by making the same use of the new queen as she had made of the one just dead. The King of Spain was devout, he absolutely wanted a

wife, the Princess des Ursins was of an age when her charms were but the charms of art; in a word, she set Alberoni to work, and it may be believed she was not scrupulous as to her means as soon as they were persuaded at Parma that she was serious and not joking. Orry, always united with Madame des Ursins, and all-powerful by her means, was her sole confidant in this important affair.

At that time the Marquis de Brancas was French ambassador at Madrid. He had flattered himself that Madame des Ursins would make him one of the Grandees of Spain. Instead of doing so she simply bestowed upon him the order of the Golden Fleece. He had never pardoned her for this. Entirely devoted to Madame de Maintenon, he became on that very account an object of suspicion to Madame des Ursins, who did not doubt that he cherished a grudge against her, on account of the favour he had missed. She allowed him no access to her, and had her eyes open upon all he did. Brancas in like manner watched all her doings. The confessor, Robinet, confided to him his fears respecting Madame des Ursins, and the chiefs of a court universally discontented, went and opened their hearts to him, thinking it was France alone which could set to rights the situation of Spain.

Brancas appreciated all the importance of what was told him, but warned by the fate of the Abbé d'Estrées, fearing even for his couriers, he took the precaution of sending word to the King that he had pressing business to acquaint him with, which he could not trust to paper, and that he wished to be allowed to come to

Versailles for a fortnight. The reply was the permission asked for, accompanied, however, with an order to communicate *en route* with the Duc de Berwick, who was about to pass to Barcelona.

Madame des Ursins, who always found means to be informed of everything, immediately knew of Brancas's projected journey, and determined to get the start of him. At once she had sixteen relays of mules provided upon the Bayonne road, and suddenly sent off to France, on Holy Thursday, Cardinal del Giudice, grand inquisitor and minister of state, who had this mean complaisance for her. She thus struck two blows at once; she got rid, at least for a time, of a Cardinal minister who troubled her, and anticipated Brancas, which in our Court was no small point.

Brancas, who felt all the importance of arriving first, followed the Cardinal on Good Friday, and moved so well that he overtook him at Bayonne, at night while he was asleep; Brancas passed straight on, charging the Commandant to amuse and to delay the Cardinal as long as possible on the morrow; gained ground, and arrived at Bordeaux with twenty-eight post horses that he had carried off with him from various stations, to keep them from the Cardinal. He arrived at Paris in this manner two days before the other, and went straight to Marly where the King was, to explain the business that had led him there. He had a long audience with the King, and received a lodging for the rest of the visit.

The Cardinal del Giudice rested four or five days at Paris, and then came to Marly where he was introduced

to the King. The Cardinal was somewhat embarrassed; he was charged with no business; all his mission was to praise Madame des Ursins, and complain of the Marquis de Brancas. These praises of Madame des Ursins were but vague; she had not sufficient confidence in the Cardinal to admit to him her real position in our Court, and to give him instructions accordingly, so that what he had to say was soon all said; against the Marquis de Brancas he had really no fact to allege, his sole crime was that he was too sharp-sighted and not sufficiently devoted to the Princess.

The Cardinal was a courtier, a man of talent, of business, of intrigue, who felt, with annoyance, that for a person of his condition and weight, such a commission as he bore was very empty. He appeared exceedingly agreeable in conversation, of pleasant manners, and was much liked in good society. He was assiduous in his attentions to the King, without importuning him for audiences that were unnecessary; and by all his conduct, he gave reason for believing that he suspected Madame des Ursins' decadence in our Court, and sought to gain esteem and confidence, so as to become by the support of the King, prime minister in Spain; but as we shall soon see, his ultramontane hobbies hindered the accomplishment of his measures. All the success of his journey consisted in hindering Brancas from returning to Spain. This was no great punishment, for Brancas had nothing more to hope for from Madame des Ursins, and was not a man to lose his time for nothing.

Up to this period not a word had been said to the

King (Louis XIV.) by the King of Spain upon the subject of his marriage; not a hint had been given that he meant to re-marry, much less with a Parma princess. This proceeding, grafted upon the sovereignty claimed by the Princesse des Ursins, and all her conduct with the King of Spain since the death of the Queen, resolved our King to disgrace her without appeal.

A remark upon Madame des Ursins, accompanied by a smile, escaped from the King, generally so complete master of himself, and appeared enigmatical to such an extent, although striking, that Torcy to whom it was addressed understood nothing, In his surprise, he related to Castries what the King had said; Castries told it to Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, who reported it to M. d'Orleans, and to me. We racked our brains to comprehend it, but in vain; nevertheless such an unintelligible remark upon a person like Madame des Ursins, who up to this time had been on such good terms with the King and Madame de Maintenon, did not appear to me to be favourable. I was confirmed in this view by what had just happened with regard to her sovereignty; but I was a thousand leagues from the thunder-bolt which this lightning announced, and which only declared itself to us by its fall.

It was not until the 27th of June that the King was made acquainted by the King of Spain with his approaching marriage. Of course, through other channels, he had not failed to hear of it long before. He passed in the lightest and gentlest manner in the world over this project, and the mystery so long and

so complete with which it had been kept from him, stranger, if possible, than the marriage itself. He could not hinder it; but from this moment he was sure of his vengeance against her who had arranged and brought it about in this manner. The disgrace of Madame des Ursins was in fact determined on between the King and Madame de Maintenon, but in a manner so secret before and since, that I know nobody who has found out by whom or how it was carried out. It is good to admit our ignorance, and not to give fictions and inventions in place of what we are unacquainted with.

I know not why, but a short time after this, the Princesse des Ursins conceived such strong suspicion of the lofty and enterprising spirit of the Princess of Parma that she repented having made this marriage, and wished to break it off. She brought forward, therefore, I know not what difficulties, and despatched a courier to Rome to Cardinal Acquaviva, who did the King of Spain's business there, ordering him to delay his journey to Parma, where he had been commanded to ask the hand of the Princess, and to see her provisionally espoused. But Madame des Ursins had changed her mind too late. The courier did not find Acquaviva at Rome. That cardinal was already far away on the road to Parma, so that there were no means of retreat.

Acquaviva was received with great honour and much magnificence; he made his demand, but delayed the espousals as long as he could, and this caused much remark. The marriage, which was to have been cele-

brated on the 25th of August, did not take place until the 15th of September. Immediately after the ceremony the new queen set out for Spain.

An envoy from Parma, with news of the marriage of the Princess arrived at Fontainebleau on the 11th October, and had an audience with the King. This was rather late in the day. For dowry she had one hundred thousand pistoles, and three hundred thousand livres' worth of jewels. She had embarked for Alicante at Sestri di Levante. A violent tempest sickened her of the sea. She landed, therefore, at Monaco, in order to traverse by land Provence, Languedoc, and Guienne, so as to reach Bayonne, and see there the Queen Dowager of Spain; sister of her mother, and widow of Charles II. Desgranges, master of the ceremonies, was to meet her in Provence, with orders to follow her, and to command the governors, lieutenants-general, and intendants to follow her also, and serve her, though she travelled incognito.

The new Queen of Spain, on arriving at Pau, found the Queen Dowager, her aunt, had come expressly from Bayonne to meet her. As they approached each other, they both descended at the same time, and after saluting, mounted alone into a beautiful calêche that the Queen Dowager had brought with her, and that she presented to her niece. They supped together alone. The Queen Dowager conducted her to Saint Jean Pied-de-Port (for in that country, as in Spain, the entrances to mountain passes are called *ports*). They separated there, the Queen Dowager making the Queen many presents, among others a garniture

of diamonds. The Duc de St. Aignan joined the Queen of Spain at Pau, and accompanied her by command of the King to Madrid. She sent Grillo, a Genoese noble, whom she has since made grandee of Spain, to thank the King for sending her the Duc de St. Aignan, and for the present he brought with him. The officers of her household had been named by Madame des Ursins.

The Queen of Spain advanced towards Madrid with the attendants sent to accompany her. She was to be met by the King of Spain at Guadalaxara, which is about the same distance from Madrid as Paris is from Fontainebleau. He arrived there, accompanied by the attendants that the Princesse des Ursins had placed near him, to keep him company, and to allow no one else to approach him. She followed in her coach, so as to arrive at the same time, and immediately afterwards he shut himself up alone with her, and saw nobody until he went to bed. This was on the 22nd of December. The next day the Princesse des Ursins set out with a small suite for a little place, seven leagues further, called Quadraqué, where the Queen was to sleep that night. Madame des Ursins counted upon enjoying all the gratitude that the Queen would feel for the unhoped-for grandeur she had obtained by her means; counted upon passing the evening with her, and upon accompanying her next day to Guadalaxara. She found, upon arriving at Quadraqué, that the Queen had already reached there. She at once entered into a lodging that had been prepared for her, opposite that of the Queen. She was in a

full Court dress. After adjusting it in a hurried manner, she went to the Queen. The coldness and stiffness of her reception surprised her extremely. She attributed it in the first place to the embarrassment of the Queen, and tried to melt this ice. Everybody withdrew, in order to leave the two alone.

Then the conversation commenced. The Queen would not long allow Madame des Ursins to continue it; but burst out into reproaches against her for her manners, and for appearing there in a dress that showed want of respect for the company she was in. Madame des Ursins, whose dress was proper, and who, on account of her respectful manners and her discourse, calculated to win the Queen, believed herself to be far from meriting this treatment, was strangely surprised, and wished to excuse herself; but the Queen immediately began to utter offensive words, to cry out, to call aloud, to demand the officers of the guard, and sharply to command Madame des Ursins to leave her presence. The latter wished to speak and defend herself against the reproaches she heard; but the Queen, increasing her fury and her menaces, cried out to her people to drive this mad woman from her presence and from the house; and absolutely had her turned out by the shoulders. Immediately afterwards, she called Amenzago, lieutenant of the body-guard, and at the same time the écuyer who had the control of her equipages. She ordered the first to arrest Madame des Ursins, and not quit her until he had placed her in a coach, with two sure officers of the guard and fifteen soldiers as sentinels over her; the

second she commanded to provide instantly a coach and six, with two or three footmen, and send off in it the Princesse des Ursins towards Burgos and Bayonne, without once stopping on the road. Amenzago tried to represent to the Queen that the King of Spain alone had the power to give such commands; but she haughtily asked him if he had not received an order from the King of Spain to obey her in everything, without reserve and without comment. It was true he had received such an order, though nobody knew a word about it.

Madame des Ursins was then immediately arrested, and put into a coach with one of her waiting-women, without having had time to change her costume or her head-dress, to take any precaution against the cold, to provide herself with any money or other things, and without any kind of refreshment in the coach, or a chemise; nothing, in fact to change or to sleep in! She was shipped off thus (with two officers of the guard, who were ready as soon as the coach), in full Court dress, just as she left the Queen. In the very short and tumultuous interval which elapsed, she sent a message to the Queen, who flew into a fresh passion upon not being obeyed, and made her set out immediately.

It was then nearly seven o'clock in the evening, two days before Christmas, the ground all covered with snow and ice, and the cold extreme and very sharp and bitter, as it always is in Spain. As soon as the Queen learned that the Princesse des Ursins was out of Quadraqué, she wrote to the King of Spain, by an

officer of the guards whom she despatched to Guadalaxara. The night was so dark that it was only by means of the snow that anything could be seen.

It is not easy to represent the state of Madame des Ursins in the coach. An excess of astonishment and bewilderment prevailed at first, and suspended all other sentiment; but grief, vexation, rage, and despair soon followed. In their turn succeeded sad and profound reflections upon a step so violent, so unheard-of, and so unjustifiable as she thought. Then she hoped everything from the friendship of the King of Spain and his confidence in her; pictured his anger and surprise, and those of the group of attached servitors, by whom she had surrounded him, and who would be so interested in exciting the King in her favour. The long winter's night passed thus; the cold was terrible, there was nothing to ward it off; the coachman actually lost the use of one hand. The morning advanced; a halt was necessary in order to bait the horses; as for the travellers there is nothing for them ever in the Spanish inns. You are simply told where each thing you want is sold. The meat is ordinarily alive; the wine, thick, flat, and strong; the bread bad; the water is often worthless; as to beds, there are some, but only for the mule-drivers, so that you must carry everything with you, and neither Madame des Ursins nor those with her had anything whatever. Eggs, where they could find any, were their sole resource; and these, fresh or not, simply boiled, supported them during all the journey.

Until this halt for the horses, silence had been profound and uninterrupted; now it was broken. During

all this long night the Princesse des Ursins had had leisure to think upon the course she should adopt, and to compose her face. She spoke of her extreme surprise, and of the little that had passed between her and the Queen. In like manner the two officers of the guard accustomed, as was all Spain, to fear and respect her more than their King, replied to her from the bottom of that abyss of astonishment from which they had not yet arisen. The horses being put to, the coach soon started again. Soon, too, the Princesse des Ursins found that the assistance she expected from the King did not arrive. No rest, no provisions, nothing to put on, until St. Jean de Luz was reached. As she went further on, as time passed and no news came, she felt she had nothing more to hope for. It may be imagined what rage succeeded in a woman so ambitious, so accustomed to publicly reign, so rapidly and shamefully precipitated from the summit of power by the hand that she herself had chosen as the most solid support of her grandeur. The Queen had not replied to the last two letters Madame des Ursins had written to her. This studied negligence was of bad augury, but who would have imagined treatment so strange and so unheard-of?

Her nephews, Lanti and Chalais, who had permission to join her, completed her dejection. Yet she was faithful to herself. Neither tears nor regrets, neither reproaches, nor the slightest weakness escaped her; not a complaint even of the excessive cold, of the deprivation of all things, or of the extreme fatigue of

such a journey. The two officers who guarded her could not contain their admiration.

At Saint Jean de Luz, where she arrived on the 14th of January, 1715, she found at last her corporeal ills at an end. She obtained a bed, change of dress, food, and her liberty. The guards, their officers, and the coach which had brought her, returned; she remained with her waiting-maid and her nephews. She had leisure to think what she might expect from Versailles. In spite of her mad sovereignty scheme so long maintained, and her hardihood in arranging the King of Spain's marriage without consulting our King, she flattered herself she should find resources in a Court she had so long governed. It was from St. Jean de Luz that she despatched a courier charged with letters for the King, for Madame de Maintenon, and for her friends. She briefly gave us an account in those letters of the thunderbolt which had fallen on her, and asked permission to come to the Court to explain herself more in detail. She waited for the return of her courier in this her first place of liberty and repose, which of itself is very agreeable. But this first courier despatched, she sent off Lanti with letters written less hastily, and with instructions. Lanti saw the King in his cabinet on the last of January, and remained there some moments. From him it was known that as soon as Madame des Ursins despatched her first courier, she had sent her compliments to the Queen Dowager of Spain at Bayonne, who would not receive them. What cruel mortifications attend a fall from a throne! Let us now return to Guadalaxara.

CHAPTER VIII.

The King of Spain acquiesces in the disgrace of Madame des Ursins—Its origin—Who struck the blow—Her journey to Versailles—Treatment there—My interview with her—She retires to Genoa—Then to Rome—Dies.

The officer of the guards, whom the Queen despatched with a letter for the King of Spain as soon as Madame des Ursins was out of Quadraqué, found the King upon the point of going to bed. He appeared moved, sent a short reply to the Queen, and gave no orders. The officer returned immediately. What is singular is, that the secret was so well kept that it did not transpire until the next morning at ten o'clock. It may be imagined what emotion seized the whole Court, and what divers movements there were among all at Guadalaxara. However, nobody dared to speak to the King, and much expectation was built upon the reply he had sent to the Queen. The morning passed and nothing was said; the fate of Madame des Ursins then became pretty evident.

Chalais and Lanti made bold to ask the King for permission to go and join the Princess in her isolation. Not only he allowed them to do so, but charged them with a letter of simple civility, in which he told her he was very sorry for what had happened; that he had

not been able to oppose the Queen's will; that he should continue to her her pensions, and see that they were punctually paid. He was as good as his word: as long as she lived she regularly received them.

The Queen arrived at Guadalaxara on the afternoon of the day before Christmas day, at the hour fixed, and as though nothing had occurred. The King received her in the same manner on the staircase, gave her his hand, and immediately led her to the chapel, where the marriage was at once celebrated; for in Spain the custom is to marry after dinner. After that he led her to her chamber, and straightway went to bed; it was before six o'clock in the evening, and both got up again for the midnight mass. What passed between them upon the event of the previous evening, was entirely unknown, and has always remained so. The day after Christmas-day the King and Queen alone together in a coach, and followed by all the Court, took the road for Madrid, where there was no more talk of Madame des Ursins than if the King had never known her. Our King showed not the least surprise at the news brought to him by a courier despatched from Guadalaxara by the Duc de Saint Aignan, though all the Court was filled with emotion and affright after having seen Madame des Ursins so triumphant.

Let us now look about for some explanations that will enable us to pierce this mystery—that remark to Torcy which escaped the King, which Torcy could not comprehend, and which he related to Castries, who told it to Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, from whom I learned it! Can we imagine that a Parma princess

brought up in a garret by an imperious mother, would have dared to take upon herself, while six leagues from the King of Spain whom she had never seen, a step so bold and unheard-of, when we consider against whom directed, a person possessing the entire confidence of that King and reigning openly? The thing is explained by the order, so unusual and so secret, that Amenzago had from the King of Spain to obey the Queen in everything, without reserve and without comment; an order that became known only at the moment when she gave orders to arrest Madame des Ursins and take her away.

Let us remark, too, the tranquillity with which our King and the King of Spain received the first intelligence of this event; the inactivity of the latter, the coldness of his letter to Madame des Ursins, and his perfect indifference what became of a person who was so cherished the day before, and who yet was forced to travel, deprived of everything, by roads full of ice and snow. We must recollect that when the King banished Madame des Ursins before, for opening the letter of the Abbé d'Estrées, and for the note she sent upon it, he did not dare to have his orders executed in the presence of the King of Spain. It was on the frontier of Portugal where our King wished him to go for the express purpose, that the King of Spain signed the order by which the Princesse des Ursins was forced to withdraw from the country. Now we had a second edition of the same volume. Let me add what I learnt from the Maréchal de Brancas, to whom Alberoni related, a long while after this disgrace, that one even-

ing as the Queen was travelling from Parma to Spain, he found her pacing her chamber, with rapid step and in agitation muttering to herself, letting escape the name of the Princesse des Ursins, and then saying with heat, "I will drive her away, the first thing." He cried out to the Queen and sought to represent to her the danger, the madness, the inutility of the enterprise which overwhelmed him. "Keep all this quiet," said the Queen, "and never let what you have heard escape you. Not a word! I know what I am about."

All these things together threw much light upon a catastrophe equally astonishing in itself and in its execution, and clearly show our King to have been the author of it; the King of Spain a consenting party and assisting by the extraordinary order given to Amenzago; and the Queen the actress, charged in some manner by the two Kings to bring it about. The sequel in France confirmed this opinion.

The fall of the Princesse des Ursins caused great changes in Spain. The Comtesse d'Altamire was named Camarera mayor, in her place. She was one of the greatest ladies in all Spain, and was hereditary Duchess of Cardonne. Cellamare, nephew of Cardinal del Giudice, was named her grand écuyer; and the Cardinal himself soon returned to Madrid and to consideration. As a natural consequence, Macanas was disgraced. He and Orry had orders to leave Spain, the latter without seeing the King. He carried with him the maledictions of the public. Pompadour, who had been named Ambassador in Spain only to amuse Madame des Ursins, was dismissed, and the Duc de

St. Aignan invested with that character, just as he was about to return after having conducted the Queen to Madrid.

In due time the Princesse des Ursins arrived in Paris, and took up her quarters in the house of the Duc de Noirmoutiers, her brother, in the Rue St. Dominique, close to mine. This journey must have appeared to her very different from the last she had made in France, when she was Queen of the Court. Few people, except her former friends and those of her former cabal, came to see her; yet, nevertheless, some curious folks appeared, so that for the first few days there was company enough; but after that, solitude followed when the ill-success of her journey to Versailles became known. M. d'Orleans, reunited now with the King of Spain, felt that it was due to his interest even more than to his vengeance to show in a striking manner, that it was solely owing to the hatred and artifice of Madame des Ursins that he had fallen into such disfavour on account of Spain, and had been in danger of losing his head. Times had changed. Monseigneur was dead, the Meudon cabal annihilated; Madame de Maintenon had turned her back upon Madame des Ursins; thus M. d'Orleans was free to act as he pleased. Incited by Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, and more still by Madame, he begged the King to prohibit Madame des Ursins from appearing anywhere (Versailles not even excepted) where she might meet Madame la Duchesse de Berry, Madame, Monsieur le Duc, and Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, who at the same time strictly forbade their households

to see her, and asked the persons to whom they were particularly attached to hold no intercourse with her. This made a great stir, openly showed that Madame des Ursins had utterly lost the support of Madame de Maintenon and the King, and much embarrassed her.

I could not feel that M. d'Orleans was acting wrong, in thus paying off his wrongs for the injuries she had heaped upon him; but I represented to him, that as I had always been an intimate friend of Madame des Ursins, putting aside her conduct towards him and making no comparison between my attachment for him and my friendship for her, I could not forget the marks of consideration she had always given me, particularly in her last triumphant journey (as I have already explained), and that it would be hard if I could not see her. We capitulated then, and M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans permitted me to see her twice—once immediately; once when she left—giving my word that I would not see her three times, and that Madame de St. Simon should not see her at all; which latter clause we agreed to very unwillingly, but there was no remedy. As I wished at least to profit by my chance, I sent word to Madame des Ursins, explaining the fetters that bound me, and saying that as I wished to see her at all events at my ease since I should see her so little, I would let pass the first few days and her first journey to Court, before asking her for an audience. My message was very well received; she had known for many years the terms on which I was with M. d'Orleans; she was not surprised with these fetters, and was grateful to me for what I had obtained.

Some days after she had been to Versailles, I went to her at two o'clock in the day. She at once closed the door to all comers, and I was *tête-à-tête* with her until ten o'clock at night.

It may be imagined what a number of things were passed in review during this long discourse. Our eight hours of conversation appeared to me like eight moments. She related to me her catastrophe, without mixing up the King or the King of Spain, of whom she spoke well; but, without violently attacking the Queen, she predicted what since has occurred. We separated, at supper time, with a thousand reciprocal protestations and regret that Madame de St. Simon could not see her. She promised to inform me of her departure early enough to allow us to pass another day together.

Her journey to Versailles did not pass off very pleasantly. She dined with the Duchesse de Luders, and then visited Madame de Maintenon; waited with her for the King, but when he came did not stop long, withdrawing to Madame Adam's, where she passed the night. The next day she dined with the Duchesse de Ventadour, and returned to Paris. She was allowed to give up the pension she received from the King, and in exchange to have her Hôtel de Ville stock increased, so that it yielded forty thousand livres a-year. Her income, besides being doubled, was thus much more sure than would have been a pension from the King which she doubted not M. d'Orleans, as soon as be became master, would take from her. She thought of retiring into Holland, but the States General would have nothing to do with her, either at

the Hague, or at Amsterdam. She had reckoned upon the Hague. She next thought of Utrecht, but was soon out of conceit with it, and turned her regards towards Italy.

The health of the King, meanwhile, visibly declining, Madame des Ursins feared lest she should entirely fall into the clutches of M. d'Orleans. She fully resolved, therefore, to make off, without knowing, however, where to fix herself; and asked permission of the King to come and take leave of him at Marly. She came there from Paris on Tuesday, the 6th of August, so as to arrive as he left dinner, that is, about ten o'clock. She was immediately admitted into the cabinet of the King, with whom she remained *tête-à-tête*, full half an hour. She passed immediately to the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, with whom she remained an hour; and then got into her coach and returned to Paris. I only knew of this leave-taking by her arrival at Marly, where I had some trouble in meeting her. As chance would have it, I went in search of her coach to ask her people what had become of her, and was speaking to them when, lo and behold! she herself arrived. She seemed very glad to see me, and made me mount with her into her coach, where for little less than an hour we discoursed very freely. She did not dissimulate from me her fears; the coldness the King and Madame de Maintenon had testified for her through all their politeness; the isolation she found herself in at the Court, even in Paris; and the uncertainty in which she was as to the choice of a retreat; all this in detail, and nevertheless without complaint, without

regret, without weakness; always reassured and superior to events, as though some one else were in question. She touched lightly upon Spain, upon the ascendancy the Queen was acquiring already over the King, giving me to understand that it could not be otherwise; running lightly and modestly over the Queen, and always praising the goodness of the King of Spain. Fear, on account of the passers-by, put an end to our conversation. She was very gracious to me; expressed regret that we must part; proceeded to tell me when she should start in time for us to have another day together; sent many compliments to Madame de St. Simon; and declared herself sensible of the mark of friendship I had given her, in spite of my engagement with M. d'Orleans. As soon as I had seen her off, I went to M. d'Orleans, to whom I related what I had just done; said I had not paid a visit, but had had simply a meeting; that it was true I could not hinder myself from seeking it, without prejudice to the final visit he had allowed me. Neither he nor Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans complained. They had fully triumphed over their enemy, and were on the point of seeing her leave France for ever, without hope in Spain.

Until now, Madame des Ursins amused by a residue of friends, increased by those of M. de Noirmoutiers with whom she lodged and who had money, had gently occupied herself with the arrangement of her affairs, changed as they were, and in withdrawing her effects from Spain. The fear lest she should find herself in the power of a Prince whom she had so cruelly

offended, and who showed, since her arrival in France, that he felt it, hurried all her measures. Her terror augmented by the change in the King that she found at this last audience had taken place since her first. She no longer doubted that his end was very near; and all her attention was directed to the means by which she might anticipate it, and be well informed of his health; this she believed her sole security in France. Terrified anew by the accounts she received of it, she no longer gave herself time for anything, but precipitately set out, on the 14th August, accompanied as far as Essonne by her two nephews. She had not time to inform me, so that I have never seen her since the day of our conversation at Marly in her coach. She did not breathe until she arrived at Lyons.

She had abandoned the project of retiring into Holland, where the States General would not have her. She herself, too, was disgusted with the equality of a republic, which counterbalanced in her mind the pleasure of the liberty enjoyed there. But she could not resolve to return to Rome, the theatre of her former reign, and appear there, proscribed and old, as in an asylum. She feared, too, a bad reception, remembering the quarrels that had taken place between the Courts of Rome and Spain. She had lost many friends and acquaintances; in fifteen years of absence all had passed away, and she felt the trouble she might be subjected to by the ministers of the Emperor, and by those of the two Crowns, with their partisans. Turin was not a Court worthy of her; the King of Sardinia had not always been pleased with her, and they knew too much for

each other. At Venice she would have been out of her element.

Whilst agitated in this manner without being able to make up her mind, she learned that the King was in extreme danger, a danger exaggerated by rumour. Fear seized her lest he should die whilst she was in his realm. She set off immediately, therefore, without knowing where to go; and solely to leave France went to Chambery, as the nearest place of safety, arriving there out of breath, so to say.

Every place being well examined, she preferred Genoa; its liberty pleased her; there was intercourse there with a rich and numerous nobility; the climate and the city were beautiful; the place was in some sort a centre and halting-point between Madrid, Paris, and Rome, with which places she was always in communication, and always hungered after all that passed there. Genoa determined on, she went there. She was well received, hoped to fix her tabernacle there, and indeed stayed some years. But at last *ennui* seized her; perhaps vexation at not being made enough of. She could not exist without meddling, and what is there for a superannuated woman to meddle with at Genoa? She turned her thoughts, therefore, towards Rome. Then, on sounding, found her course clear, quitted Genoa and returned to her nest.

' She was not long there before she attached herself to the King and Queen of England (the Pretender and his wife), and soon governed them openly. What a poor resource! But it was courtly and had a flavour

of occupation for a woman who could not exist without movement. She finished her life there remarkably healthy in mind and body, and in a prodigious opulence, which was not without its use in that deplorable Court. For the rest, Madame des Ursins was in mediocre estimation at Rome, was deserted by the Spanish, little visited by the French, but always faithfully paid by France and Spain, and unmolested by the Regent. She was always occupied with the world, and with what she had been, but was no longer; yet without meanness, nay, with courage and dignity.

The loss she experienced in January, 1720, of the Cardinal de la Trémoille, although there was no real friendship between them, did not fail to create a void in her. She survived him three years, preserved all her health, her strength, her mind until death, and was carried off, more than eighty years of age, at Rome, on the 5th of December, 1722, after a very short illness.

She had the pleasure of seeing Madame de Maintenon forgotten and annihilated in Saint Cyr, of surviving her, of seeing at Rome her two enemies, Giudice and Alberoni, as profoundly disgraced as she,—one falling from the same height,—and of relishing the forgetfulness, not to say contempt, into which they both sank. Her death, which, a few years before, would have resounded throughout all Europe, made not the least sensation. The little English Court regretted her, and some private friends also, of whom I was one. I did not hide this, although, on account of M. le Duc d'Orleans, I had kept up no intercourse with her; for the rest, nobody seemed to perceive she had disappeared. She

was, nevertheless, so extraordinary a person, during all the course of her long life, everywhere, and had so grandly figured, although in various ways; had such rare intellect, courage, industry, and resources; reigned so publicly and so absolutely in Spain; and had a character so sustained and so unique, that her life deserves to be written, and would take a place among the most curious fragments of the history of the times in which she lived.

CHAPTER IX.

Sudden illness of the Duc de Berry—Suspicious symptoms—The Duchesse prevented from seeing him—His death—Character—Manners of the Duchesse de Berry.

But I must return somewhat now, in order to make way for a crowd of events which have been pressing forward all this time, but which I have passed by, in going straightforward at once to the end of Madame des Ursins' history.

On Monday, the 30th April, 1714, the King took medicine, and worked after dinner with Pontchartrain. This was at Marly. About six o'clock, he went to M. le Duc de Berry, who had had fever all night. M. le Duc de Berry had risen without saying anything, had been with the King at the medicine-hour, and intended to go stag-hunting; but on leaving the King's chamber shivering seized him, and forced him to go back again. He was bled while the King was in his chamber, and the blood was found very bad; when the King went to bed the doctors told him the illness was of a nature to make them hope that it might be a case of contagion. M. le Duc de Berry had vomited a good deal—a black vomit. Fagon said, confidently, that it was from the blood; the other doctors fastened upon some chocolate

he had taken on the Sunday. From this day forward I knew what was the matter. Boulduc, apothecary of the King, and extremely attached to Madame de Saint Simon and to me, whispered in my ear that M. le Duc de Berry would not recover, and that, with some little difference, his malady was the same as that of which the Dauphin and Dauphine died. He repeated this the next day, and never once varied afterwards; saying to me on the third day, that none of the doctors who attended the Prince were of a different opinion, or hid from him what they thought.

On Tuesday, the 1st of May, the Prince was bled in the foot at seven o'clock in the morning, after a very bad night; took emetics twice, which had a good effect; then some manna; but still there were two accesses. The King went to the sick room afterwards, held a finance council, would not go shooting, as he had arranged, but walked in his gardens. The doctors, contrary to their custom, never reassured him. The night was cruel. On Wednesday, the 2nd of May, the King went, after Mass, to M. le Duc de Berry, who had been again bled in the foot. The King held the Council of State, as usual, dined in Madame de Maintenon's rooms, and afterwards reviewed his Guards. Coettenfao, chevalier d'honneur of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, came during the morning to beg the King, in her name, that Chirac, a famous doctor of M. d'Orleans, should be allowed to see M. le Duc de Berry. The King refused, on the ground that all the other doctors were in accord, and that Chirac, who might differ with them, would embarrass them. After dinner Mesdames

de Pompadour and La Vieuville arrived, on the part of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, to beg the King that she might be allowed to come and see her husband, saying that she would come on foot rather than stay away. It would have been better, surely, for her to come in a coach, if she so much wished, and, before alighting, to send to the King for permission so to do. But the fact is, she had no more desire to come than M. de Berry had to see her. He never once mentioned her name, or spoke of her, even indirectly. The King replied to those ladies by saying that he would not close the door against Madame la Duchesse de Berry, but, considering the state she was in, he thought it would be very imprudent on her part to come. He afterwards told M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans to go to Versailles and hinder her from coming. Upon returning from the review the King went again to see M. le Duc de Berry. He had been once more bled in the arm, had vomited all day—much blood too—and had taken some Robel water three times, in order to stop his sickness. This vomiting put off the communion. Père de la Rue had been by his side ever since Tuesday morning, and found him very patient and resigned.

On Thursday, the 3rd, after a night worse than ever, the doctors said they did not doubt that a vein had been broken in the stomach. It was reported that this accident had happened by an effort M. de Berry made when out hunting on the previous Thursday, the day the Elector of Bavaria arrived. His horse slipped; in drawing the animal up, his body struck against the

pommel of the saddle, so it was said, and ever since he had spit blood every day. The vomiting ceased at nine o'clock in the morning, but the patient was no better. The King, who was going stag-hunting, put it off. At six o'clock at night M. de Berry was so choked that he could no longer remain in bed; about eight o'clock he found himself so relieved that he said to Madame, he hoped he should not die; but soon after, the malady increased so much that Père de la Rue said it was no longer time to think of anything but God, and of receiving the Sacrament. The poor Prince himself seemed to desire it. A little after ten o'clock at night the King went to the chapel, where a consecrated Host had been kept prepared ever since the commencement of the illness. M. le Duc de Berry received it, and extreme unction, in presence of the King, with much devotion and respect. The King remained nearly an hour in the chamber, supped alone in his own, did not receive the Princesses afterwards, but went to bed. M. le Duc d'Orleans, at ten o'clock in the morning, went again to Versailles, as Madame la Duchesse de Berry wished still to come to Marly. M. le Duc de Berry related to Père de la Rue, who at least said so, the accident just spoken of; but, it was added, "his head was then beginning to wander." After losing the power of speech, he took the crucifix Père de la Rue held, kissed it, and placed it upon his heart. He expired on Friday, the 4th of May, 1714, at four o'clock in the morning, in his twenty-eighth year, having been born at Versailles, the last day of August, 1686.

M. le Duc de Berry was of ordinary height, rather fat, of a beautiful blonde complexion, with a fresh, handsome face, indicating excellent health. He was made for society, and for pleasure, which he loved; the best, gentlest, most compassionate, and accessible of men, without pride, and without vanity, but not without dignity or self-appreciation. He was of medium intellect, without ambition or desire, but had very good sense, and was capable of listening, of understanding, and of always taking the right side in preference to the wrong, however speciously put. He loved truth, justice, and reason; all that was contrary to religion pained him to excess, although he was not of marked piety. He was not without firmness, and hated constraint. This caused it to be feared that he was not supple enough for a younger son, and, indeed, in his early youth he could not understand that there was any difference between him and his eldest brother, and his boyish quarrels often caused alarm.

He was the most gay, the most frank, and consequently the most loved of the three brothers; in his youth nothing was spoken of but his smart replies to Madame and M. de la Rochefoucauld. He laughed at preceptors and at masters—often at punishment. He scarcely knew anything except how to read and write; and learned nothing after being freed from the necessity of learning. This ignorance so intimidated him, that he could scarcely open his mouth before strangers, or perform the most ordinary duties of his rank; he had persuaded himself that he was an ass and a fool, fit for nothing. He was so afraid of the King that he dared

not approach him, and was so confused if the King looked hard at him, or spoke of other things than hunting, or gaming, that he scarcely understood a word, or could collect his thoughts. As may be imagined, such fear does not go hand in hand with deep affection.

He commenced life with Madame la Duchesse de Berry as do almost all those who marry very young and green. He became extremely amorous of her; this, joined to his gentleness and natural complaisance, had the usual effect, which was to thoroughly spoil her. He was not long in perceiving it; but love was too strong for him. He found a woman proud, haughty, passionate, incapable of forgiveness, who despised him, and who allowed him to see it, because he had infinitely less head than she; and because, moreover, she was supremely false and strongly determined. She piqued herself upon both these qualities, and on her contempt for religion, ridiculing M. le Duc de Berry for being devout; and all these things became insupportable to him. Her gallantries were so prompt, so rapid, so unmeasured, that he could not help seeing them. Her endless private interviews with M. le Duc d'Orleans, in which everything languished if he was present, made him furious. Violent scenes frequently took place between them; the last, which occurred at Rambouillet, went so far that Madame la Duchesse de Berry received a kick * * * *, and a menace that she should be shut up in a convent for the rest of her life; and when M. le Duc de Berry fell ill, he was thumbing his hat, like a child, before the King, relating all his grievances,

and asking to be delivered from Madame la Duchesse de Berry. Hitherto I have only alluded to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, but, as will be seen, she became so singular a person when her father was Regent, that I will here make her known more completely than I have yet done.

She was tall, handsome, well made, with however but little grace, and had something in her eyes which made you fear what she was. Like her father and mother she spoke well and with facility. Timid in trifles, yet in other things terrifyingly bold,—foolishly haughty sometimes, and sometimes mean to the lowest degree,—it may be said that she was a model of all the vices, avarice excepted; and was all the more dangerous because she had art and talent. I am not accustomed to over-colour the picture I am obliged to present to render things understood, and it will easily be perceived how strictly I am reserved upon the ladies, and upon all gallantries, not intimately associated with what may be called important matters. I should be so here, more than in any other case, from self-love, if not from respect for the sex and dignity of the person. The considerable part I played in bringing about M. le Duchesse de Berry's marriage, and the place that Madame de Saint Simon, in spite of herself and of me, occupied in connection with her, would be for me reasons more than enough for silence, if I did not feel that silence would throw obscurity over all the sequel of this history. It is then to the truth that I sacrifice my self-love, and with the same truthfulness I will say that if I had known or merely suspected, that the

Princesse was so bad as she showed herself directly after her marriage, and always more and more since, she would never have become Duchesse de Berry.

I have already told how she annoyed M. le Duc de Berry by ridiculing his devotion. In other ways she put his patience to severe trials, and more than once was in danger of public exposure. She partook of few meals in private, at which she did not get so drunk as to lose consciousness, and to bring up all she had taken on every side. The presence of M. le Duc de Berry, of M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, of ladies with whom she was not on familiar terms, in no way restrained her. She complained even of M. le Duc de Berry for not doing as she did. She often treated her father with a haughtiness which was terrifying on all accounts.

In her gallantries she was as unrestrained as in other things. After having had several favourites, she fixed herself upon La Haye, who from King's page had become private écuyer of M. le Duc de Berry. The oglings in the Salon of Marly were perceived by everybody; nothing restrained them. At last, it must be said, for this fact encloses all the rest, she wished La Haye to run away with her from Versailles to the Low Countries, whilst M. le Duc de Berry and the King were both living. La Haye almost died with fright at this proposition, which she herself made to him. His refusal made her furious. From the most pressing intreaties she came to all the invectives that rage could suggest, and that torrents of tears allowed her to pronounce. La Haye had to suffer her attacks—now

tender, now furious; he was in the most mortal embarrassment. It was a long time before she could be cured of her mad idea, and in the mean while she subjected the poor fellow to the most frightful persecution. Her passion for La Haye continued until the death of M. le Duc de Berry, and sometime after.

M. le Duc de Berry was buried at Saint Denis on Wednesday the 16th of May; M. le Duc d'Orleans was to have headed the procession, but the same odious reports against him that had circulated at the death of the Dauphin had again appeared, and he begged to be let off. M. le Duc filled his place. Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who was in the family way, kept her bed; and in order that she should not be seen there when people came to pay her the usual visits of condolence, the room was kept quite dark. Many ridiculous scenes and much indecent laughter, that could not be restrained, thus arose. Persons accustomed to the room could see their way, but those unaccustomed stumbled at every step, and had need of guidance. For want of this, Père du Trevoux, and Père Tellier after him, both addressed their compliments to the wall; others to the foot of the bed. This became a secret amusement, but happily did not last long.

As may be imagined, the death of M. le Duc de Berry was a deliverance for Madame la Duchesse de Berry. She was, as I have said, in the family way; she hoped for a boy, and counted upon enjoying as a widow more liberty than she had been able to take as a wife. She had a miscarriage, however, on Saturday

the 16th of June, and was delivered of a daughter which lived only twelve hours. The little corpse was buried at Saint Denis, Madame de Saint Simon at the head of the procession. Madame la Duchesse de Berry, shortly before this event, received two hundred thousand livres income of pension; but the establishment she would have had if the child had been a boy was not allowed her.

CHAPTER X.

Maisons seeks my acquaintance—His mysterious manner—Increase of the intimacy—Extraordinary news—The bastards declared princes of the blood — Rage of Maisons and Noailles — Opinion of the Court and country.

It is time now that I should say something about an event that caused an immense stir throughout the land, and was much talked of even in foreign parts. I must first introduce, however, a sort of a personage whose intimacy was forced upon me at this period; for the two incidents are in a certain degree associated together.

M. d'Orleans for some little time had continually represented to me, how desirous one of his acquaintances was to secure my friendship. This acquaintance was Maisons, president in the parliament, grandson of that superintendent of the finances who built the superb château of Maisons, and son of the man who had presided so unworthily at the judgment of our trial with M. de Luxembourg, which I have related in its place. Maisons was a person of much ambition, exceedingly anxious to make a name, gracious and flattering in manners to gain his ends, and amazingly fond of grand society.

The position of Maisons, where he lived, close to

Marly, afforded him many opportunities of drawing there the principal people of the Court. It became quite the fashion to go from Marly to his château. The King grew accustomed to hear the place spoken of, and was in no way displeased. Maisons had managed to become very intimate with M. le Duc and M. le Prince de Conti. These two princes being dead he turned his thoughts towards M. d'Orleans. He addressed himself to Canillac, who had always been an intimate friend of M. d'Orleans, and by him soon gained the intimacy of that prince. But he was not yet satisfied. He wished to circumvent M. d'Orleans more completely than he could by means of Canillac. He cast his eye, therefore, upon me. I think he was afraid of me on account of what I have related concerning his father. He had an only son about the same age as my children. For a long time he had made all kinds of advances and visited them often. The son's intimacy did not, however, assist the father; so that at last Maisons made M. le Duc d'Orleans speak to me himself.

I was cold; tried to get out of the matter with compliments and excuses. M. d'Orleans, who believed he had found a treasure in his new acquaintance, returned to the charge; but I was not more docile. A few days after, I was surprised by an attack of the same kind from M. de Beauvilliers. How or when he had formed an intimacy with Maisons, I have never been able to unravel; but formed it, he had; and he importuned me so much, nay exerted his authority over me, that at last I found I must give way. Not to offend M.

d'Orleans by yielding to another after having refused to yield to him, I waited until he should again speak to me on the subject, so that he might give himself the credit of vanquishing me. I did not wait long. The Prince attacked me anew, maintained that nothing would be more useful to him, than an intimacy between myself and Maisons, who scarcely dared to see him, except in secret, and with whom he had not the same leisure or liberty for discussing many things that might present themselves. I had replied to all this before; but as I had resolved to surrender to the Prince (after the authority of the Duc de Beauvilliers had vanquished me), I complied with his wish.

Maisons was soon informed of it, and did not let my resolution grow cold. M. le Duc d'Orleans urged me to go and sleep a night in Paris. Upon arriving there, I found a note from Maisons, who had already sent an ocean of compliments to me by the Prince and the Duke. This note, for reasons to be told me afterwards, appointed a meeting at eleven o'clock this night, in the plain behind the Invalides, in a very mysterious manner. I went there with an old coachman of my mother's and a lackey to put my people off the scent. There was a little moonlight. Maisons in a small carriage awaited me. We soon met. He mounted into my coach. I never could comprehend the mystery of this meeting. There was nothing on his part but advances, compliments, protestations, allusions to the former interview of our fathers; only such things in fact as a man of cleverness and breeding says when he wishes to form a close intimacy with any one. Not

a word that he said was of importance or of a private nature.

I replied in the civillest manner possible to the abundance he bestowed upon me. I expected afterwards something that would justify the hour, the place, the mystery, in a word, of our interview. What was my surprise to hear no syllable upon these points. The only reason Maisons gave for our secret interview was that from that time he should be able to come and see me at Versailles with less inconvenience, and gradually increase the number and the length of his visits until people grew accustomed to see him there! He then begged me not to visit him in Paris, because his house was always too full of people. This interview lasted little less than half an hour. It was long indeed, considering what passed. We separated with much politeness, and the first time he went to Versailles he called upon me towards the middle of the day.

In a short time he visited me every Sunday. Our conversation by degrees became more serious. I did not fail to be on my guard, but drew him out upon various subjects; he being very willing.

We were on this footing when, returning to my room at Marly about midday on Sunday the 29th of July, I found a lackey of Maisons with a note from him, in which he conjured me to quit all business, and come immediately to his house at Paris, where he would wait for me alone, and where I should find that something was in question, that could not suffer the slightest delay, that could not even be named in

writing, and which was of the most extreme importance. This lackey had long since arrived, and had sent my people everywhere in search of me. I was engaged that day to dine with M. and Madame de Lauzun. To have broken my engagement would have been to set the curiosity and the malignity of M. de Lauzun at work. I dared not disappear; therefore I gave orders to my coachman, and as soon as I had dined I vanished. Nobody saw me get into my chaise; and I quickly arrived at Paris, and immediately hastened to Maison's with eagerness easy to imagine.

I found him alone with the Duc de Noailles. At the first glance I saw two dismayed men, who said to me in an exhausted manner, but after a heated though short preface, that the King had declared his two bastards and their male posterity to all eternity, real princes of the blood, with full liberty to assume all their dignities, honours, and rank, and capacity to succeed to the throne in default of the others.

At this news, which I did not expect, and the secret of which had hitherto been preserved, without a particle of it transpiring, my arms fell. I lowered my head and remained profoundly silent, absorbed in my reflections. They were soon disturbed by cries which aroused me. These two men commenced pacing the chamber; stamped with their feet; pushed and struck the furniture; raged as though each wished to be louder than the other, and made the house echo with their noise. I avow that so much hubbub seemed suspicious to me on the part of two men, one so sage and so measured, and to whom this rank was of no

consequence; the other always so tranquil, so crafty, so master of himself. I knew not why this sudden fury succeeded to such dejected oppression; and I was not without suspicion that their passion was put on merely to excite mine. If this was their design, it succeeded ill. I remained in my chair, and coldly asked them what was the matter. My tranquillity sharpened their fury. Never in my life have I seen anything so surprising.

I asked them if they had gone mad, and if instead of this tempest it would not be better to reason, and see whether something could not be done. They declared it was precisely because nothing could be done against a thing not only resolved on, but executed, declared, and sent to the Parliament, that they were so furious; that M. le Duc d'Orleans, on the terms he was with the King, would not dare even to whisper objections; that the princes of the blood, mere children as they were, could only tremble; that the Dukes had no means of opposition, and that the Parliament was reduced to silence and slavery. Thereupon they set to work to see who could cry the louder and reviled again, sparing neither things nor persons.

I, also, was in anger, but this racket kept me cool and made me smile. I argued with them and said, that after all I preferred to see the bastards princes of the blood, capable of succeeding to the throne, than to see them in the intermediary rank they occupied. And it is true that as soon as I had cooled myself, I felt thus.

At last the storm grew calm, and they told me that the Chief President and the Attorney-General—who, I knew, had been at Marly very early in the morning at the Chancellor's—had seen the King in his cabinet soon after he rose, and had brought back the declaration, all prepared. Maisons must, however, have known this earlier; because when the lackey he sent to me set out from Paris, those gentlemen could not have returned there. Our talk led to nothing, and I regained Marly in all haste, in order that my absence might not be remarked.

Nevertheless it was towards the King's supper hour when I arrived. I went straight to the salon, and found it very dejected. People looked, but scarcely dared to approach each other; at the most, a sign or a whisper in the ear, as the courtiers brushed by one another, was ventured on. I saw the King sit down to table; he seemed to me more haughty than usual, and continually looked all around. The news had only been known one hour; everybody was still congealed and upon his guard.

As soon as the King was seated (he had looked very hard at me in passing) I went straight to M. du Maine's. Although the hour was unusual, the doors fell before me; I saw a man, who received me with joyful surprise, and who, as it were, moved through the air towards me, all lame that he was. I said that I came to offer him a sincere compliment, that we (the Dukes) claimed no precedence over the princes of the blood; but what we claimed was, that there should be nobody between the princes of the blood and us; that as this

intermediary rank no longer existed, we had nothing more to say, but to rejoice that we had no longer to support what was insupportable. The joy of M. du Maine burst forth at my compliments, and he startled me with a politeness inspired by the transport of triumph.

But if he was delighted at the declaration of the King, it was far otherwise with the world. Foreign dukes and princes fumed, but uselessly. The Court uttered dull murmurs more than could have been expected. Paris and the provinces broke out; the Parliament did not keep silent. Madame de Maintenon, delighted with her work, received the adoration of her familiars.

As for me, I will content myself with but few reflections upon this most monstrous, astounding, and frightful determination of the King. I will simply say, that it is impossible not to see in it an attack upon the Crown; contempt for the entire nation, whose rights are trodden under foot by it; insult to all the princes of the blood; in fact the crime of high treason in its most rash and most criminal extent. Yes! however venerable God may have rendered in the eyes of men the majesty of Kings and their sacred persons, which are his anointed; however execrable may be the crime known as high treason, of attempting their lives; however terrible and singular may be the punishments justly invented to prevent that crime, and to remove by their horror the most infamous from the infernal resolution of committing it,—we cannot help finding in the crime in question a plenitude not in the other, however

abominable it may be. Yes! to overthrow the most holy laws, that have existed ever since the establishment of monarchy; to extinguish a right the most sacred—the most important—the most inherent in the nation: to make succession to the throne, purely, supremely, and despotically arbitrary; in a word, to make of a bastard a crown prince,—is a crime more black, more vast, more terrible, than that of high treason against the chief of the state.*

* I have endeavoured to preserve the tone of majestic indignation which St. Simon indulges in on this inadequate occasion. After all, the King merely exercised the imperial right of adoption; and it is perfectly immaterial whether the persons chosen were his natural children or not. The Duc du Maine was not a very estimable person, though we must remember that St. Simon visits on him the sins of his father; but the Comte de Toulouse seems to have been more respectable than any member of the Royal family then living, legitimate or not.

CHAPTER XI.

The King unhappy and ill at ease—Court paid to him—A new scheme to rule him—He yields—New annoyances—His will—Anecdotes concerning it—Opinions of the Court—M. du Maine.

But let me now explain by what means the King was induced to arrive at, and publish this terrible determination.

He was growing old, and though no external change in him was visible, those near him, had for some time begun to fear that he could not live long. This is not the place to descant upon a health hitherto so good and so even: suffice it to mention, that it silently began to give way. Overwhelmed by the most violent reverses of fortune after being so long accustomed to success, the King was even more overwhelmed by domestic misfortunes. All his children had disappeared before him, and left him, abandoned to the most fatal reflections. At every moment he himself expected the same kind of death. Instead of finding relief from his anguish among those who surrounded him, and whom he saw most frequently, he met with nothing but fresh trouble there. Excepting Maréchal, his chief surgeon, who laboured unceasingly to cure him of his suspicions, Madame de Maintenon,

M. du Maine, Fagon, Bloin, the other principal valets sold to the bastard and his former governors,—all sought to augment these suspicions; and in truth it was not difficult to do so. Nobody doubted that poison had been used, nobody could seriously doubt it; and Maréchal, who was as persuaded as the rest, held a different opinion before the King only to deliver him from a useless torment which could not but do him injury. But M. du Maine, and Madame de Maintenon also, had too much interest to maintain him in this fear, and by their art filled him with horror against M. d'Orleans, whom they named as the author of these crimes, so that the King with this prince before his eyes every day, was in a perpetual state of alarm.

With his children the King had lost, and by the same way, a princess, who in addition to being the soul and the ornament of his court, was moreover, all his amusement, all his joy, all his affection, in the hours when he was not in public. Never, since he entered the world, had he become really familiar with any one but her; it has been seen elsewhere to what extent. Nothing could fill up this great void: the bitterness of being deprived of her augmented, because he could find no diversion. This unfortunate state made him seek relief everywhere in abandoning himself more and more to Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine.

They soon managed to obtain possession of him, as it were, entirely; leaving no art unexhausted in order to flatter, to amuse, to please, and to interest him. He was made to believe that M. du Maine was utterly

without ambition; like a good father of a family, solely occupied with his children, touched with the grandeur of his nearness to the King, simple, frank, upright, and one who after working at his duties all day, and after giving himself time for prayer and piety, amused himself in hunting, and drew upon his natural gaiety and cheerfulness, without knowing anything of the Court, or of what was passing! Compare this portrait with his real character, and we shall feel with terror what a rattle-snake was introduced into the King's privacy!

Established thus in the mind and heart of the King, the opportunity seemed ripe for profiting by precious time that could not last long. Everybody smiled upon the project of M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon. They had rendered M. d'Orleans odious in the eyes of the King and of the whole country, by the most execrable calumnies. How could he defend himself? shut up as the King was, how oppose them? how interfere with their dark designs? M. du Maine wished not only to be made prince of the blood, but to be made guardian of the heir to the throne, so as to dwarf the power of the Regent as much as possible. He flattered himself that the feeling he had excited against M. d'Orleans in the Court, in Paris, and in the provinces would be powerfully strengthened by dispositions so dishonourable; that he should find himself received as the guardian and protector of the life of the royal infant, to whom was attached the salvation of France, of which he would then become the idol; that the independent possession of the young King, and of his military and civil households, would strengthen with

the public applause the power with which he would be invested in the state by this testament; that the Regent, reviled and stripped in this manner, not only would be in no condition to dispute anything, but would be unable to defend himself from any attempts the bastard might afterwards make against him. M. du Maine wished in fact to take from M. d'Orleans everything, except the name of Regent, and to divide all the power between himself and his brother. Such was his scheme, that the King by increditable art was induced to sanction and approve.

But the schemers had tough work before they obtained this success. They found that the King would not consent to their wishes without much opposition. They hit upon a devilish plan to overpower his resistance. Hitherto, they had only been occupied in pleasing him, in amusing him, in anticipating his wishes, in praising him,—let me say the word, in adoring him. They had redoubled their attention, since, by the Dauphine's death, they had become his sole resource. Not being able now to lead him as they wished, but determined to do so at all cost, they adopted another system, certain as they were that they could do so with impunity. Both became serious, oftentimes dejected, silent, furnishing nothing to the conversation, letting pass what the King forced himself to say, sometimes not even replying, if it was not a direct interrogation. In this manner all the leisure hours of the King were rendered dull and empty; his amusements and diversions were made fatiguing and sad, and a weight was cast upon him, which he was the more unable to bear,

because it was quite new to him, and he was utterly without means to remove it. The few ladies who were admitted to the intimacy of the King knew not what to make of the change they saw in Madame de Maintenon. They were duped at first by the plea of illness; but seeing at last that its duration passed all bounds, that it had no intermission, that her face announced no malady, that her daily life was in no way deranged, that the King became as serious and as sad as she, they sounded each other to find out the cause. Fear, lest it should be something in which they, unknowingly, were concerned, troubled them; so that they became even worse company to the King than Madame de Maintenon.

There was no relief for the King. All his resource was in the common-place talk of the Count de Toulouse, who was not amusing, although ignorant of the plot, and the stories of his valets, who lost tongue as soon as they perceived that they were not seconded by the Duc du Maine in his usual manner. Maréchal and all the rest, astonished at the mysterious dejection of the Duc du Maine, looked at each other without being able to divine the cause. They saw that the King was sad and bored; they trembled for his health, but not one of them dared to do anything. Time ran on, and the dejection of M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon increased. This is as far as the most instructed have ever been able to penetrate. To describe the interior scenes that doubtless passed during the long time this state of things lasted, would be to write romance. Truth demands that we should

relate what we know, and admit what we are ignorant of. I cannot go farther, therefore, or pierce deeper into the density of these dark mysteries.

What is certain is, that cheerfulness came back all at once, with the same surprise to the witnesses of it, as the long-continued dejection had caused them, simply because they understood no more of the end than of the commencement. The double knowledge did not come to them until they heard the frightful crash of the thunderbolt which fell upon France, and astonished all Europe.

To give some idea of the opposition from the King, M. du Maine and Madame de Maintenon had to overcome, and to show how reluctantly he consented to their wishes, more than one incident may be brought forward. Some days before the news transpired, the King, full of the enormity of what he had just done for his bastards, looked at them in his cabinet, in presence of the valets, and of D'Antin and D'O., and in a sharp manner, that told of vexation, and with a severe glance, suddenly thus addressed himself to M. du Maine: "You have wished it; but know that however great I may make you, and you may be, in my lifetime, you are nothing after me; and it will be for you then to avail yourself of what I have done for you, if you can."

Everybody present trembled at a thunder-clap so sudden, so little expected, so entirely removed from the character and custom of the King, and which showed so clearly the extreme ambition of the Duc du Maine, and the violence he had done to the

weakness of the King, who seemed to reproach himself for it, and to reproach the bastard for his ambition and tyranny. The consternation of M. du Maine seemed extreme at this rough sally, which no previous remark had led to. The King had made a clean breast of it. Everybody fixed his eyes upon the floor and held his breath. The silence was profound for a considerable time; it finished only when the King passed into his wardrobe. In his absence everybody breathed again. The King's heart was full to bursting with what he had just been made to do; but like a woman who gives birth to two children, he had at present brought but one into the world, and bore a second of which he must be delivered, and of which he felt all the pangs without any relief from the suffering the first had caused him.

Again, on Sunday, the 27th August, the Chief President and the Attorney-General were sent for by the King. He was at Versailles. As soon as they were alone with him, he took from a drawer, which he unlocked, a large and thick packet, sealed with seven seals (I know not if by this M. du Maine wished to imitate the mysterious book with Seven Seals, of the Apocalypse, and so sanctify the packet). In handing it to them, the King said: "Gentlemen, This is my will. No one but myself knows its contents. I commit it to you to keep in the Parliament, to which I cannot give a greater testimony of my esteem and confidence than by rendering it the depository of it. The example of the Kings my predecessors, and that of the will of the King, my father, do not allow me to be

ignorant of what may become of this; but they would have it; they have tormented me; they have left me no repose, whatever I might say. Very well! I have bought my repose. Here is the will; take it away: come what may of it, at least I shall have rest, and shall hear no more about it."

At this last word, that he finished with a dry nod, he turned his back upon them, passed into another cabinet, and left them both nearly turned into statues. They looked at each other frozen by what they had just heard, and still more by what they had just seen in the eyes and the countenance of the King; and as soon as they had collected their senses, they retired and went to Paris. It was not known until after dinner that the King had made a will and given it to them. In proportion as the news spread, consternation filled the Court, while the flatterers, at bottom as much alarmed as the rest, and as Paris was afterwards, exhausted themselves in praises and eulogies.

The next day, Monday the 28th, the Queen of England came from Chaillot, where she almost always was, to Madame de Maintenon's. As soon as the King perceived her, "Madame," said he to her, like a man full of something and angry, "I have made my will; I have been tormented to do it;" then casting his eyes upon Madame de Maintenon, "I have bought repose; I know the powerlessness and inutility of it. We can do all we wish while we live; afterwards we are less than the meanest. You have only to see what became of my father's will immediately after his death, and the wills of so many other Kings. I know it well;

but nevertheless they have wished it; they gave me no rest nor repose, no calm until it was done; ah well! then, Madame, it is done; come what may of it, I shall be no longer tormented."

Words such as these so expressive of the extreme violence suffered by the King, of his long and obstinate battle before surrendering, of his vexation, and uneasiness, demand the clearest proofs. I had them from people who heard them, and would not advance them unless I were perfectly persuaded of their exactness.

As soon as the Chief President and the Attorney-General returned to Paris, they sent for some workmen, whom they led into a tower of the Palace of Justice, behind the Buvette, or drinking-place, of the grand chamber and the cabinet of the Chief President. They had a big hole made in the wall of this tower, which is very thick, deposited the testament there, closed up the opening with an iron door, put an iron grating by way of second door, and then walled all up together. The door and the grating each had three locks, the same for both; and a different key for each of the three, which consequently opened each of the two locks, the one in the door and the one in the grating. The Chief President, kept one key, the Attorney-General another, and the Chief Greffier of the Parliament the third. The Parliament was assembled and the Chief President flattered the members as best he might upon the confidence shown them in entrusting them with this deposit.

At the same time was presented to the Parliament

an edict that the Chief President and the Attorney-General had received from the hand of the Chancellor at Versailles the same morning the King had given them his will, and the edict was registered. It was very short. It declared that the packet committed to the Chief President and to the Attorney-General contained the will of the King, by which he had provided for the protection and guardianship of the young King, and had chosen a Regency council, the dispositions of which for good reasons he had not wished to publish; that he wished this deposit should be preserved during his life in the registry of the Parliament, and that at the moment when it should please God to call him from the world, all the chambers of the Parliament, all the princes of the royal house, and all the peers who might be there, should assemble and open the will; and that after it was read, all its dispositions should be made public and executed, nobody to be permitted to oppose them in any way.

Notwithstanding all this secresy, the terms of the will were pretty generally guessed, and as I have said, the consternation was general. It was the fate of M. du Maine to obtain what he wished; but always with the maledictions of the public. This fate did not abandon him now, and as soon as he felt it, he was overwhelmed, and Madame de Maintenon exasperated, and their attentions and their care redoubled, to shut up the King, so that the murmurs of the world should not reach him. They occupied themselves more than ever to amuse and to please him, and to fill the air around him with praises, joy, and public adoring

at an act so generous and so grand, and at the same time so wise and so necessary to the maintenance of good order and tranquillity, which would cause him to reign so gloriously even after his reign.

This consternation was very natural, and is precisely why the Duc du Maine found himself deceived and troubled by it. He believed he had prepared everything, smoothed everything, in rendering M. d'Orleans so suspected and so odious: he had succeeded, but not so much as he imagined. His desires and his emissaries had exaggerated everything; and he found himself overwhelmed with astonishment, when instead of the public acclamations with which he had flattered himself the will would be accompanied, it was precisely the opposite.

It was seen very clearly that the will assuredly could not have been made in favour of M. d'Orleans, and although public feeling against him had in no way changed, no one was so blind as not to see that he must be Regent by the incontestible right of his birth; that the dispositions of the testament could not weaken that right, except by establishing a power that should balance his; and that thus two parties would be formed in the state, the chief of each of which would be interested in vanquishing the other, everybody being necessitated to join one side or other, thereby running a thousand risks without any advantage. The rights of the two disputants were compared. In the one they were found sacred, in the other they could not be found at all. The two persons were compared. Both were found odious, but M. d'Orleans was deemed superior to M.

Maine. I speak only of the mass of uninstructed people, and of what presented itself naturally and of itself. The better-informed had even more cause to arrive at the same decision.

M. d'Orleans was stunned by the blow; he felt that it fell directly upon him, but during the lifetime of the King he saw no remedy for it. Silence respectful and profound appeared to him the sole course open; any other would only have led to an increase of precautions. The King avoided all discourse with him upon this matter; M. du Maine the same. M. d'Orleans was contented with a simple approving monosyllable to both, like a courtier who ought not to meddle with anything; and he avoided conversation upon this subject, even with Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, and with anybody else. I was the sole person to whom he dared to unbosom himself; with the rest of the world he had an open, an ordinary manner, was on his guard against any discontented sign, and against the curiosity of all eyes. The inexpressible abandonment in which he was, in the midst of the Court, guaranteed him at least from all remarks upon the will. It was not until the health of the King grew more menacing that he began to speak and be spoken to thereon.

As for M. du Maine, despite his good fortune, he was not to be envied. At Sceaux, where he lived, the Duchesse du Maine, his wife, ruined him by her extravagance. Sceaux was more than ever the theatre of her follies, and of the shame and embarrassment of her husband, by the crowd from the Court and the town, which abounded there and laughed at them.

She herself played there Athalie (assisted by actors and actresses) and other pieces several times a week. Whole nights were passed in coteries, games, fêtes, illuminations, fireworks,—in a word, fancies and fripperies of every kind and every day. She revelled in the joy of her new greatness,—redoubled her follies; and the Duc du Maine, who always trembled before her, and who moreover feared that the slightest contradiction would entirely turn her brain, suffered all this, even piteously doing the honours as often as he could without ceasing in his conduct to the King.

However great might be his joy, whatever the unimaginable greatness to which he had arrived, he was not tranquil. Like those tyrants who have usurped by their crimes the sovereign power, and who fear as so many conspiring enemies all their fallen citizens they have enslaved—he felt as though seated under that sword that Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, suspended by a hair over his table, above the head of a man whom he placed there because he believed him happy, and in this manner wished to make him feel what passed unceasingly in himself. M. du Maine, who willingly expressed in pleasantry the most serious things, frankly said to his familiars, that he was "like a louse between two finger-nails" (the princes of the blood and the peers), by which he could not fail to be cracked if he did not take care! This reflection troubled the excess of his pleasure, and that of the greatness and the power to which so many artifices had elevated him. He feared the princes of the blood as soon as they should be of age to feel the infamy

and the danger of the wound he had given them; he feared the parliament, which even under his eyes had not been able to dissimulate its indignation at the violence he had committed against the most holy and the most inviolable laws; he even feared the Dukes, so timid are injustice and tyranny!

CHAPTER XII.

A new visit from Maisons—His violent project—My objections—He persists—His death and that of his wife—Death of the Duc de Beauvilliers—His character—Of the Cardinal d'Estrées—Anecdotes—Death of Fénélon.

Let me return now to Maisons. Five days after the King's will had been walled up, in the manner I have described, he came to me and made a pathetic discourse upon the injustice done to M. le Duc d'Orleans by this testament, and did all he could to excite me by railing in good set terms against dispositions intended to add to the power and grandeur of the bastards.

When he had well harangued, I said he had told me nothing new; that I saw the same truths as he with the same evidence; that the worst thing I found was that there was no remedy.

"No remedy!" he exclaimed, interrupting me, with his sly and cunning laugh; "courage and ability can always find one for everything, and I am astonished that you, who have both, should have nothing to suggest while everybody is going to confusion."

I asked him how it was possible to suppress a will registered by edict; a document solemn and public deposited with ceremony in the very depths of the

palace, with precautions known to everybody—nature and art combining to keep it in safety?

"You are at a loss to know!" replied Maisons to me. "Have ready at the instant of the King's death sure troops and sensible officers, all ready and well instructed; and with them, masons and locksmiths—march to the palace, break open the doors and the wall, carry off the will, and let it never be seen."

In my extreme surprise I asked him, what he expected would be the fruit of such violence? I pointed out, that to seize by force of arms a public and solemn document, in the midst of the capital, in despite of all law and order, would be to put weapons into the hands of the enemies of M. le Duc d'Orleans, who assuredly would be justified in crying out against this outrage, and who would find the whole country disposed to echo their cries. I said too, that if in the execution of such an odious scheme a sedition occurred, and blood were shed, universal hatred and opprobrium would fall upon the head of M. le Duc d'Orleans, and deservedly so.

We carried on our discussion a long time, but Maisons would in no way give up his scheme. After leaving me he went to M. le Duc d'Orleans and communicated it to him. Happily it met with no success with the Duc. Indeed, he was extremely astonished at it; but what astonished us more was, that Maisons persisted in it up to his death, which preceded by some few days that of the King, and pressed it upon M. le Duc d'Orleans and myself till his importunity became persecution.

It was certainly not his fault that I over and over again refused to go to the Grand Chamber of the Parliament to examine the place, as Maisons wished me to do; I who never went to the Parliament except for the reception of the peers or when the King was there. Not being able to vanquish what he called my obstinacy, Maisons begged me at the least to go and fix myself upon the Quai de la Megisserie, where so much old iron is sold, and examine from that spot the tower where the will was; he pointed it out to me; it looked out upon the Quai des Morfondus, but was behind the buildings on the quai. What information could be obtained from such a point of view may be imagined. I promised to go there, not to stop, and thus awake the attention of the passers-by, but to pass along and see what was to be seen; adding, that it was simply out of complaisance to him, and not because I meant to agree in any way to his enterprise.

What is incomprehensible is, that for a whole year Maisons pressed his charming project upon us. The worst enemy of M. le Duc d'Orleans could not have devised a more rash and ridiculous undertaking. I doubt whether many people would have been found in all Paris sufficiently deprived of sense to fall in with it. What are we to think then of a Parliamentary President of such consideration as Maisons had acquired at the Palace of Justice, at the Court, in the town, where he had always passed for a man of intellect, prudent, circumspect, intelligent, capable, measured? Was he vile enough, in concert with M. du Maine, to open this gulf beneath our feet, to push us to our ruin,

and by the fall of M. le Duc d'Orleans—the sole prince of the blood old enough to be Regent—to put M. le Duc du Maine in his place, from which to the crown there was only one step, as none are ignorant, left to be taken? It seems by no means impossible: M. du Maine, that son of darkness, was, judging him by what he had already done, quite capable of adding this new crime to his long list.

The mystery was, however, never explained. Maisons died before its darkness could be penetrated. His end was terrible. He had no religion; his father had had none. He married a sister of the Maréchal de Villars, who was in the same case. Their only son they specially educated in unbelief. Nevertheless, everything seemed to smile upon them. They had wealth, consideration, distinguished friends. But mark the end.

Maisons is slightly unwell. He takes rhubarb twice or thrice, unseasonably; more unseasonably comes Cardinal de Bissy to him, to talk upon the constitution, and thus hinder the operation of the rhubarb; his inside seems on fire, but he will not believe himself ill; the progress of his disease is great in a few hours; the doctors, though soon at their wits' ends, dare not say so; the malady visibly increases; his whole household is in confusion; he dies, forty-eight years of age, in the midst of a crowd of friends, of clients, without power or leisure to think for a moment what is going to happen to his soul!

His wife survives him ten or twelve years, opulent, and in consideration, when suddenly she has an attack

of apoplexy in her garden. Instead of thinking of her state, and profiting by leisure, she makes light of her illness, has another attack a few days after, and is carried off on the 5th of May, 1727, in her forty-sixth year, without having had a moment free.

Her son, for a long time much afflicted, seeks to distinguish himself and acquire friends. Taking no warning from what has occurred, he thinks only of running after the fortune of this world, and is surprised at Paris by the small-pox. He believes himself dead, thinks of what he has neglected all his life, but fear suddenly seizes him, and he dies in the midst of it, on the 13th of September, 1731, leaving an only son, who dies a year after him, eighteen months old, all the great wealth of the family going to collateral relatives.

These Memoirs are not essays on morality, therefore I have contented myself with the most simple and the most naked recital of facts; but I may, perhaps, be permitted to apply here those two verses of the 37th Psalm, which appear so expressly made for the purpose: "I have seen the impious exalted like the cedars of Lebanon: Yea, he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found."

But let me leave this subject now, to treat of other matters. On Friday, the last day of August, I lost one of the best and most revered of friends, the Duc de Beauvilliers. He died at Vaucresson after an illness of about two months, his intellect clear to the last, aged sixty-six years, having been born on the 24th of October, 1648.

He was the son of M. de Saint Aignan, who with

honour and valour was truly romantic in gallantry, in belles-lettres, and in arms. He was Captain of the Guards of Gaston, and at the end of 1649 bought of the Duc de Liancourt the post of first-gentleman of the King's chamber. He commanded afterwards in Berry against the party of M. le Prince, and served elsewhere subsequently. In 1661 he was made Chevalier of the Order, and in 1661 Duke and Peer. His first wife he lost in 1679. At the end of a year he married one of her chamber-maids, who had been first of all engaged to take care of her dogs. She was so modest, and he so shamefaced, that in despite of repeated pressing on the part of the King, she could not be induced to take her tabouret. She lived in much retirement, and had so many virtues that she made herself respected all her life, which was long. M. de Beauvilliers was one of the children of the first marriage. I know not what care M. and Madame de St. Aignan took of the others, but they left him, until he was six or seven years of age, to the mercy of their lodge-keeper. Then he was confided to the care of a canon of Notre Dame de Clery. The household of the canon consisted of one maid-servant, with whom the little boy slept; and they continued to sleep together until he was fourteen or fifteen years old, without either of them thinking of evil, or the canon remarking that the lad was growing into a man. The death of his eldest brother called M. de Beauvilliers home. He entered the army, served with distinction at the head of his regiment of cavalry, and was brigadier.

He was tall, thin, had a long and ruddy face, a large

aquiline nose, a sunken mouth, expressive, piercing eyes, an agreeable smile, a very gentle manner, but ordinarily retiring, serious, and concentrated. By disposition he was hasty, hot, passionate, fond of pleasure. Ever since God had touched him, which happened early in his life, he had become gentle, modest, humble, kind, enlightened, charitable, and always full of real piety and goodness. In private, where he was free, he was gay, joked and bantered pleasantly, and laughed with good heart. He liked to be made fun of: there was only the story of his sleeping with the canon's servant that wounded his modesty, and I have seen him embarrassed when Madame de Beauvilliers has related it,—smiling, however, but praying her sometimes not to tell it. His piety, which, as I have said, commenced early in life, separated him from companions of his own age. At the army one day, during a promenade of the King, he walked alone, a little in front. Some one remarked it, and observed, sneeringly, that "he was meditating." The King, who heard this, turned towards the speaker, and, looking at him, said, "Yes, 'tis M. de Beauvilliers, one of the best men of the Court, and of my realm." This sudden and short apology caused silence, and food for reflection, so that the fault-finders remained in respect before his merit.

The King must have entertained a high regard for him, to give him, in 1670, the very delicate commission he entrusted to him. Madame had just been so openly poisoned, the conviction was so complete and so general that it was very difficult to palliate it. Our King, and

the King of England, between whom she had just become a stronger bond, by the journey she had made into England, were penetrated by grief and indignation, and the English could not contain themselves. The King chose the Duc de Beauvilliers to carry his compliments of condolence to the King of England, and under this pretext to try to prevent this misfortune interfering with their friendship and their union, and to calm the fury of London and the nation. The King was not deceived: the prudent dexterity of the Duc de Beauvilliers brought round the King of England, and even appeased London and the nation.

M. de Beauvilliers had expressed a wish to be buried at Montargis, in the Benedictine monastery, where eight of his daughters had become nuns. Madame de Beauvilliers went there, and by an act of religion, terrible to think of, insisted upon being present at the interment. She retired to her house at Paris, where during the rest of her life she lived in complete solitude, without company or amusement of any kind. For nearly twenty years she remained there, and died in 1733, seventy-five years of age, infinitely rich in alms and all sorts of good works.

The King taxed the infantry regiments, which had risen to an excessive price. This venality of the only path by which the superior grades can be reached is a great blot upon the military system, and stops the career of many a man who would become an excellent soldier. It is a gangrene which for a long time has eaten into all the orders and all the parties of the state, and under which it will be odd if all do not

succumb. Happily it is unknown, or little known, in all the other countries of Europe!

Towards the end of this year Cardinal d'Estrées died in Paris at his abbey of Saint Germain des Prés, nearly eighty-seven years of age, having always enjoyed perfect health of body and mind until this illness, which was very short, and which left his intellect clear to the last. It is proper and curious to pause for a moment upon a personage, all his life of importance, and who at his death was Cardinal, Bishop of Albano, Abbé of Longpont, of Mont Saint Éloi, of Saint Nicholas-aux-Bois, of la Staffarde in Piedmont (where Catinat gained a celebrated battle before being Maréchal of France), of Saint Claude in Franche-Comté, of Anchin in Flanders, and of Saint Germain des Prés in Paris. He was also Commander of the Order of the promotion of 1688.

Merit, aided by the chances of fortune, made out of an obscure family of the Boulonais country, a singularly illustrious race in the fourth generation, of which Mademoiselle de Tourbes alone remains. The cardinal, sister of the last Maréchal d'Estrées, their uncle, used to say, that he knew his fathers as far as the one who had been page of Queen Anne, Duchess of Brittany; but beyond that he knew nothing, and it was not worth while searching. Gabrielle d'Estrées, mistress of Henry IV., whose beauty made her father's fortune, and whose history is too well known to be here alluded to, was sister of the cardinal's father, but died thirty years before he was born. It was through her that the family became

elevated. The father of Cardinal d'Estrées was distinguished all his life by his merit, his capacity, and the authority and elevated posts he held. He was made Marshal of France in 1626, and it is a thing unique that he, his son, and his grandson were not only Marshals of France, but all three were in succession seniors of that corps for a long time.

The Cardinal d'Estrées was born in 1627, and for forty years lived with his father, profiting by his lessons and his consideration. He was of the most agreeable manners, handsome, well-made, full of honour, wit, and ability; in society the pleasantest person in the world, and yet well instructed; indeed, of rare erudition, generous, obliging, dignified, incapable of meanness, he was with so much talent and so many great and amiable qualities generally loved and respected, and deserved to be. He was made Cardinal in 1671, but was not declared until after many delays had occurred. These delays much disturbed him. It was customary, then, to pay many visits. One evening the Abbé de la Victoire, one of his friends, and very witty, arrived very late at a supper, in a house where he was expected. The company importunely asked him, where he had been, and what had delayed him.

"Alas!" replied the Abbé, in a tone of sadness, "where have I been? I have been all day accompanying the body of poor M. de Laon." [The Cardinal d'Estrée was then Bishop and Duke of Laon.]

"M. de Laon!" cried everybody, "M. de Laon dead! Why, he was quite well yesterday. 'Tis dreadful. Tell us what has happened."

"What has happened?" replied the Abbé, still with the same tone. "Why, he took me with him when he paid his visits, and though his body was with me, his spirit was at Rome, so that I quitted him very wearied." At this recital grief changed into merriment.

That grand dinner at Fontainebleau for the Prince of Tuscany, at which the Prince was to be the only guest, and yet never received his invitation from the Cardinal, I have already mentioned. He was oftentimes thus absent, but never when business or serious matters were concerned, so that his forgetfulness was amusing. He never could bear to hear of his domestic affairs. Pressed and tormented by his steward and his maître d'hôtel to overlook their accounts, that he had not seen for many years, he appointed a day to be devoted to them. The two financiers demanded that he should close his door so as not to be interrupted; he consented with difficulty, then changed his mind, and said that if Cardinal Bonzi came he must be admitted, but that it was not likely he would come on that particular day. Directly afterwards he sent a trusty servant to Cardinal Bonzi, entreating him to come on such and such a day, between three and four o'clock, conjuring him not to fail, and begging him above all to come as of his own accord, the reason to be explained afterwards. On the appointed day Cardinal d'Estrées told his porter to let no one enter in the afternoon except Cardinal Bonzi, who assuredly was not likely to come, but who was not to be sent away if he did. His people delighted at having their

master to themselves all day without interruption, arrived about three o'clock; the Cardinal quitted his family and the few friends who had that day dined with him, and passed into a cabinet where his business people laid out their papers. He said a thousand absurdities to them upon his expenditure, of which he understood nothing, and unceasingly looked towards the window, without appearing to do so, secretly sighing for a prompt deliverance. A little before four o'clock, a coach arrived in the court-yard; his business people, enraged with the porter, exclaimed that there will then be no more opportunity for working. The Cardinal in delight referred to the orders he had given. "You will see," he added, "that it is Cardinal Bonzi, the only man I excepted, and who, of all days in the world, comes to-day."

Immediately afterwards, the Cardinal was announced, and the intendant and maître d'hôtel were forced to make off with their papers and their table. As soon as he was alone with Bonzi, he explained why he had requested this visit, and both laughed heartily. Since then his business people have never caught him again, never during the rest of his life would he hear speak of them.

He must have had honest people about him; for every day his table was magnificent, and filled at Paris and at the Court with the best company. His equipages were so, also; he had numberless domestics, many gentlemen, chaplains, and secretaries. He gave freely to the poor, and to his brother the Maréchal and his children (who were not well off), and yet died without owing a crown to a living soul.

His death, for which he had been long prepared, was fine—edifying and very christian-like. He was universally regretted. A joke of his with the King is still remembered. One day, at dinner, where he always paid much attention to the Cardinal, the King complained of the inconvenience he felt in no longer having teeth.

"Teeth, sire!" replied the Cardinal; "why, who *has* any teeth?"

The joke is that the Cardinal, though old, still had very white and very beautiful teeth, and that his mouth, large, but agreeable, was so shaped that it showed them plainly in speaking. Therefore the King burst out laughing at this reply, and all present also, including the Cardinal, who was not in the slightest degree embarrassed. I might go on for ever telling about him, but enough, perhaps, has been already said.

The commencement of the new year, 1715, was marked by the death of Fénélon at Cambrai, where he had lived in disgrace so many years. I have already said something about him, so that I have now but little to add. His life at Cambrai was remarkable for the assiduity with which he attended to the spiritual and temporal wants of his flock. He was indefatigable in the discharge of his functions, and in endeavouring to gain all hearts. Cambrai is a place much frequented; through which many people pass. During the war the number of wounded soldiers he had received into his house or attended to in the hospitals passes all belief. He spared nothing for them, neither physical comforts nor spiritual consolations. Thus it is incredible to what an extent he

became the idol of the whole army. His manners, to high and low, were most affable, yet everywhere he was the prelate, the gentleman, the author of "Telemachus." He ruled his diocese with a gentle hand, in no way meddled with the Jansenists; he left all untouched. Take him for all in all, he had a bright genius and was a great man. His admiration true or feigned for Madame Guyon remained to the last, yet always without suspicion of impropriety. He had so exactly arranged his affairs that he died without money, and yet without owing a sou to anybody.

CHAPTER XIII.

Character and position of the Duc d'Orleans—His manners, talents, and virtues—His weakness—Anecdote illustrative thereof—"The Débonnaire"—Adventure of the Grand Prieur in England—Education of the Duc d'Orleans—Character of Dubois—His pernicious influence—The Duc's emptiness—His deceit—His love of painting—The Fairies at his birth—The Duc's timidity—An instance of his mistrustfulness.

The reign of Louis XIV. was approaching its conclusion, so that there is now nothing more to relate but what passed during the last month of his life, and scarcely so much. These events, indeed, so curious and so important, are so mixed up with those that immediately followed the King's death, that they cannot be separated from them. It will be interesting and is necessary to describe the projects, the thoughts, the difficulties, the different resolutions, which occupied the brain of the prince, who, despite the efforts of Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine, was of necessity about to be called to the head of affairs during the minority of the young King. This is the place, therefore, to explain all these things, after which we will resume the narrative of the last month of the King's life, and go on to the events which followed his death.

But, as I have seen, before entering upon this thorny path, it will be as well to make known, if

possible, the chief personage of the story, the impediments interior and exterior in his path, and all that personally belonged to him.

M. le Duc d'Orleans was at the most of mediocre stature, full-bodied without being fat; his manner and his deportment were easy and very noble; his face was broad and very agreeable, high in colour; his hair black and wig the same. Although he danced very badly and had but ill succeeded at the riding-school, he had in his face, in his gestures, in all his movements, infinite grace, and so natural that it adorned even his most ordinary commonplace actions. With much ease when nothing constrained him, he was gentle, affable, open, of facile and charming access; the tone of his voice was agreeable, and he had a surprisingly easy flow of words upon all subjects which nothing ever disturbed, and which never failed to surprise; his eloquence was natural and extended even to his most familiar discourse, while it equally entered into his observations upon the most abstract sciences, on which he talked most perspicuously; the affairs of government, politics, finance, justice, war, the court, ordinary conversation, the arts and mechanics. He could speak as well too upon history and memoirs, and was well acquainted with pedigrees. The personages of former days were familiar to him; and the intrigues of the ancient courts were to him as those of his own time. To hear him, you would have thought him a great reader. Not so. He skimmed; but his memory was so singular that he never forgot things, names, or dates, cherishing remembrance of things with

precision; and his apprehension was so good, that in skimming thus it was, with him, precisely as though he had read very laboriously. He excelled in unpremeditated discourse, which, whether in the shape of repartee or jest, was always appropriate and vivacious. He often reproached me, and others more than he, with "not spoiling him;" but I often gave him praise merited by few, and which belonged to nobody so justly as to him; it was, that besides having infinite ability and of various kinds, the singular perspicuity of his mind was joined to so much exactness, that he would never have made a mistake in anything if he had followed the first suggestions of his judgment. He oftentimes took this my eulogy as a reproach, and he was not always wrong, but it was not the less true. With all this he had no presumption, no trace of superiority natural or acquired; he reasoned with you as with his equal, and struck the most able with surprise. Although he never forgot his own position, nor allowed others to forget it, he carried no constraint with him, but put everybody at his ease and placed himself upon the level of all others.

He had the weakness to believe that he resembled Henry IV. in everything, and strove to affect the manners, the gestures, the bearing, of that monarch. Like Henry IV. he was naturally good, humane, compassionate; and, indeed, this man, who has been so cruelly accused of the blackest and most inhuman crimes, was more opposed to the destruction of others than any one I have ever known, and had such a singular dislike to causing anybody pain that it may

be said, his gentleness, his humanity, his easiness had become faults; and I do not hesitate to affirm, that that supreme virtue which teaches us to pardon our enemies he turned into vice, by the indiscriminate prodigality with which he applied it; thereby causing himself many sad embarrassments and misfortunes, examples and proofs of which will be seen in the sequel.

I remember that about a year, perhaps, before the death of the King, having gone up early after dinner into the apartments of Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans at Marly, I found her in bed with the meagrims, and M. d'Orleans alone in the room, seated in an arm-chair at her pillow. Scarcely had I sat down than Madame la Duchesse began to talk of some of those execrable imputations concerning M. d'Orleans unceasingly circulated by Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine; and of an incident arising therefrom, in which the Prince and the Cardinal de Rohan had played a part against M. d'Orleans. I sympathised with her all the more because the Duc, I knew not why, had always distinguished and courted those two brothers, and thought he could count upon them. "And what will you say of M. d'Orleans," added the Duchesse, "when I tell you that since he has known this, known it beyond doubt, he treats them exactly the same as before?"

I looked at M. d'Orleans, who had uttered only a few words to confirm the story, as it was being told, and who was negligently lolling in his chair, and I said to him with warmth:

"Oh, as to that, Monsieur, the truth must be told; since Louis the Débonnaire, never has there been such a Débonnaire as you."

At these words he rose in his chair, red with anger to the very whites of his eyes, and blurted out his vexation against me for abusing him, as he pretended, and against Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans for encouraging me, and laughing at him.

"Go on," said I, "treat your enemies well, and rail at your friends. I am delighted to see you angry. It is a sign that I have touched the sore point; when you press the finger on it the patient cries. I should like to squeeze out all the matter, and after that you would be quite another man, and differently esteemed."

He grumbled a little more, and then calmed down. This was one of two occasions only, on which he was ever really angry with me.

Two or three years after the death of the King, I was chatting in one of the grand rooms of the Tuileries, where the Council of the Regency was, according to custom soon to be held, and M. d'Orleans at the other end was talking to some one in a window recess. I heard myself called from mouth to mouth, and was told that M. d'Orleans wished to speak to me. This often happened before the council. I went therefore to the window where he was standing. I found a serious bearing, a concentrated manner, an angry face, and was much surprised.

"Monsieur," said he to me at once, "I have a

serious complaint against you; you, whom I have always regarded as my best of friends."

"Against me! Monsieur!" said I, still more surprised. "What is the matter, then, may I ask?"

"The matter!" he replied with a mien still more angry; "something you cannot deny;—verses you have made against me."

"I— verses!" was my reply. "Why, who the devil has been telling you such nonsense? You have been acquainted with me nearly forty years, and do you not know, that never in my life have I been able to make a single verse—much less verses."

"No, no, by Heaven," replied he, "you cannot deny these;" and forthwith he began to sing to me, a street song in his praise, the chorus of which was: *Our Regent is débonnaire, la, la, he is débonnaire,* with a burst of laughter.

"What!" said I, "you remember it still!" and smiling, I added also, "since you are revenged for it, remember it in good earnest." He kept on laughing a long time before going to the Council, and could not hinder himself. I have not been afraid to write this trifle, because it seems to me that it paints the man.

M. d'Orleans loved liberty, and as much for others as for himself. He extolled England to me one day on this account, as a country where there are no banishments, no "lettres de câchet," and where the king may close the door of his palace to anybody, but can keep no one in prison; and thereupon related to me with enjoyment, that besides the Duchess of

Portsmouth, Charles the Second had many subordinate mistresses; that the Grand Prieur, young and amiable in those days, driven out of France for some folly, had gone to England to pass his exile and had been well received by the King. By way of thanks, he seduced one of those mistresses, by whom the King was then so smitten, that he sued for mercy, offered money to the Grand Prieur, and undertook to obtain his reconciliation in France. The Grand Prieur held firm. Charles prohibited him the palace. He laughed at this, and went every day to the theatre with his conquest, and placed himself opposite the King. At last, Charles not knowing what to do to deliver himself from his tormentor, begged our King to recal him, and this was done. But the Grand Prieur said he was very comfortable in England and continued his game. Charles outraged, confided to the King (Louis XIV.), the state he was thrown into by the Grand Prieur, and obtained a command so absolute and so prompt, that his tormentor was afterwards obliged to go back into France.

M. d'Orleans admired this; and I know not if he would not have wished to be the Grand Prieur. He always related this story with delight. Thus, of ambition for reigning or governing, he had none. If he made a false move in Spain it was because he had been misdirected. What he would have liked best would have been to command armies while war lasted, and divert himself the rest of the time without constraint to himself or to others. He was, in fact, very fit for this. With much valour, he had also much fore-

sight, judgment, coolness, and vast capacity. It may be said that he was captain, engineer, and army purveyor; that he knew the strength of his troops, the names and the company of the officers, and the most distinguished of each corps; that he knew how to make himself adored, at the same time keeping up discipline, and could execute the most difficult things, while unprovided with everything. Unfortunately there is another side of this picture, which it will be as well now to describe.

M. d'Orleans, by disposition so adapted to become the honour and the master-piece of an education, was not fortunate in his teachers. Saint Laurent, to whom he was first confided, was, it is true, the man in all Europe best fitted to act as the instructor of kings, but he died, before his pupil was beyond the birch, and the young prince, as I have related, fell entirely into the hands of the Abbé Dubois. This person has played such an important part in the state since the death of the King, that it is fit that he should be made known. The Abbé Dubois was a little, pitiful, wizened, herring-gutted man, in a flaxen-wig, with a weazel's face, brightened by some intellect. In familiar terms, he was a regular scamp. All the vices unceasingly fought within him for supremacy, so that a continual uproar filled his mind. Avarice, debauchery, ambition, were his gods; perfidy, flattery, foot licking his means of action; complete impiety was his repose; and he held the opinion as a great principle, that probity and honesty are chimeras, with which people deck themselves, but which have no existence.

In consequence, all means were good to him. He excelled in low intrigues; he lived in them, and could not do without them; but they always had an aim, and he followed them with a patience terminated only by success, or by firm conviction that he could not reach what he aimed at, or unless, as he wandered thus in deep darkness, a glimmer of light came to him from some other cranny. He passed thus his days in sapping and counter-sapping. The most impudent deceit had become natural to him, and was concealed under an air that was simple, upright, sincere, often bashful. He would have spoken with grace and forcibly, if, fearful of saying more than he wished, he had not accustomed himself to a fictitious hesitation, a stuttering which disfigured his speech, and which, redoubled when important things were in question, became insupportable and sometimes unintelligible. He had wit, learning, knowledge of the world, much desire to please and insinuate himself, but all this was spoiled by an odour of falsehood which escaped in spite of him through every pore of his body—even in the midst of his gaiety, which made whoever beheld it sad. Wicked besides, with reflection, both by nature and by argument, treacherous and ungrateful, expert in the blackest villanies, terribly brazen when detected; he desired everything, envied everything, and wished to seize everything. It was known afterwards, when he no longer could restrain himself, to what an extent he was selfish, debauched, inconsistent, ignorant of everything, passionate, headstrong, blasphemous and mad, and to what an extent he publicly despised his master,

the state, and all the world, never hesitating to sacrifice everybody and everything to his credit, his power, his absolute authority, his greatness, his avarice, his fears and his vengeance.

Such was the sage to whom M. le Duc d'Orleans was confided in early youth!

Such a good master did not lose his pains with his new disciple, in whom the excellent principles of Saint Laurent had not had time to take deep root, whatever esteem and affection he may have preserved through life for that worthy man. I will admit here, with bitterness, for everything should be sacrificed to the truth, that M. le Duc d'Orleans brought into the world a failing—let us call things by their names—a weakness, which unceasingly spoiled all his talents, and which were of marvellous use to his preceptor all his life. Dubois led him into debauchery, made him despise all duty and all decency, and persuaded him that he had too much mind to be the dupe of religion, which he said was a politic invention to frighten ordinary intellects, and keep the people in subjection. He filled him too with his favourite principle, that probity in man and virtue in woman, are mere chimeras, without existence in anybody except a few poor slaves of early training. This was the basis of the good ecclesiastic's doctrines, whence arose the licence of falsehood, deceit, artifice, infidelity, perfidy; in a word, every villany, every crime, was turned into policy, capacity, greatness, liberty and depth of intellect, enlightenment, good conduct, if it could be hidden, and if suspicions and common prejudices could be avoided.

Unfortunately all conspired in M. d'Orleans to open his heart and his mind to this execrable poison: a fresh and early youth, much strength and health, joy at escaping from the yoke as well as vexation at his marriage, the wearisomeness produced by idleness, the impulse of his passions, the example of other young men, whose vanity and whose interest it was to make him live like them. Thus he grew accustomed to debauchery, above all to the uproar of it, so that he could not do without it, and could only divert himself by dint of noise, tumult, and excess. It is this which led him often into such strange and such scandalous debauches, and as he wished to surpass all his companions, to mix up with his parties of pleasure the most impious discourses, and as a precious refinement, to hold the most outrageous orgies on the most holy days, as he did several times during his Regency on Good Friday, by choice, and on other similar days. The more debauched a man was, the more he esteemed him; and I have unceasingly seen him in admiration, that reached almost to veneration for the Grand Prieur, —because for forty years he had always gone to bed drunk, and had never ceased to keep mistresses in the most public manner, and to hold the most impious and irreligious discourses. With these principles, and the conduct that resulted from them, it is not surprising that M. le Duc d'Orleans was false to such an extent, that he boasted of his falsehood, and plumed himself upon being the most skilful deceiver in the world. He and Madame la Duchesse de Berry sometimes disputed which was the cleverer of the two; and this in public

before M. le Duc de Berry, Madame de Saint Simon, and others ! *

M. le Duc d'Orleans, following out the traditions of the Palais Royal, had acquired the detestable taste and habit of embroiling people one with the other, so as to profit by their divisions. This was one of his principal occupations during all the time he was at the head of affairs, and one that he liked the best; but which, as soon as discovered, rendered him odious, and caused him a thousand annoyances. He was not wicked, far from it; but he could not quit the habits of impiety, debauchery, and deceit into which Dubois had led him. A remarkable feature in his character is, that he was suspicious and full of confidence at the same time with reference to the very same people.

It is surprising that with all his talents he was totally without honest resources for amusing himself. He was born bored; and he was so accustomed to live out of himself, that it was insufferable to him to return, incapable as he was of trying even to occupy himself. He could only live in the midst of the movement and torrent of business; at the head of an army for instance, or in the cares that arose out of the execution of campaign projects, or in the excitement and uproar of debauchery. He began to languish as soon as he was without noise, excess, and tumult, the time painfully hanging upon his hands. He cast himself upon painting, when his great fancy for chemistry had passed

* These curious admissions of St. Simon as to the execrable hypocrisy of his favourite prince, singularly diminish our faith in his innocence of the many horrible crimes laid to his charge.

or grown deadened, in consequence of what had been said upon it. He painted nearly all the afternoon at Versailles and at Marly.* He was a good judge of pictures, liked them, and made a collection, which in number and excellence was not surpassed by those of the crown. He amused himself afterwards in making composition stones and seals over charcoal, the fumes of which often drove me away; and the strongest perfumes, which he was fond of all his life, but from which I turned him because the King was very much afraid of them, and soon sniffed them. In fact, never was man born with so many talents of all kinds, so much readiness and facility in making use of them, and yet never was man so idle, so given up to vacuity and weariness. Thus Madame painted him very happily by an illustration from fairy tales, of which she was full.

She said, that all the fairies had been invited to his birth; that all came, and that each gave him some talent, so that he had them all. But, unfortunately, an old fairy, who had disappeared so many years that she was no longer remembered, had been omitted from the invitation lists. Piqued at this neglect, she came supported upon her little wand, just at the moment when all the rest had endowed the child with their gifts. More and more vexed, she revenged herself by

* It is to be observed that St. Simon cannot see that the exercise of the arts was a respectable amusement. He introduces these details by saying, "Il se trouva destitué de toute espèce de ressource avec tant de talents, qui en devaient être une inépuisable d'amusements pour lui." Then he tells us, contemptuously, that M. d'Orleans spent his afternoons in painting.

rendering useless all the talents he had received from the other fairies, not one of which, though possessing them all, in consequence of her malediction, was he able to make use of. It must be admitted, that on the whole this is a speaking portrait.

One of the misfortunes of this prince was being incapable of following up anything, and an inability to comprehend, even, how any one else could do so. Another, was a sort of insensibility which rendered him indifferent to the most mortal and the most dangerous offences; and as the nerve and principle of hatred and friendship, of gratitude and vengeance, are the same, and as they were wanting in him, the consequences were infinite and pernicious. He was timid to excess, knew it, and was so ashamed that he affected to be exactly the reverse, and plumed himself upon his daring. But the truth is, as was afterwards seen, nothing could be obtained from him, neither grace, nor justice, except by working upon his fears, to which he was very susceptible; or by extreme importunity. He tried to put people off by words, then by promises, of which he was monstrously prodigal, but which he only kept when made to people who had good firm claws. In this manner he broke so many engagements that the most positive became counted as nothing; and he promised moreover to so many different people, what could only be given to one, that he thus opened out a copious source of discredit to himself and caused much discontent. Nothing deceived or injured him more than the opinion he had formed, that he could deceive all the world. He was no longer believed even when

he spoke with the best faith, and his facility much diminished the value of everything he did. To conclude, the obscure, and for the most part blackguard company, which he ordinarily frequented in his debauches, and which he did not scruple publicly to call his *Roués*, drove away all decent people, and did him infinite harm.

His constant mistrust of everything and everybody was disgusting, above all when he was at the head of affairs. The fault sprang from his timidity, which made him fear his most certain enemies and treat them with more distinction than his friends; from his natural easiness, from a false imitation of Henry IV., in whom this quality was by no means the finest; and from that unfortunate opinion which he held, that probity was a sham. He was, nevertheless, persuaded of my probity; and would often reproach me with it as a fault and prejudice of education which had cramped my mind and obscured my understanding, and he said as much of Madame de St. Simon, because he believed her virtuous. I had given him so many proofs of my attachment that he could not very well suspect me; and yet, this is what happened two or three years after the establishment of the Regency. I give it as one of the most striking of the touches that paint his portrait.

It was autumn. M. d'Orleans had dismissed the councils for a fortnight. I profited by this to go and spend the time at La Ferté. I had just passed an hour alone with the Duc, and had taken my leave of him and gone home, where in order to be in repose I had

closed my door to everybody. In about an hour at most, I was told that Biron, with a message from M. le Duc d'Orleans was at the door, with orders to see me, and that he would not go away without. I allowed Biron to enter, all the more surprised because I had just quitted M. le Duc d'Orleans, and eagerly asked him his news. Biron was embarrassed, and in his turn asked where was the Marquis de Ruffec (my son). At this my surprise increased, and I demanded what he meant. Biron more and more confused, admitted that M. le Duc d'Orleans wanted information on this point, and had sent him for it. I replied, that my son was with his regiment at Besançon, lodging with M. de Levi, who commanded in Franche Comté.

"Oh," said Biron, "I know that very well: but have you any letter from him?"

"What for?" I asked.

"Because, frankly, since I must tell you all," said he, "M. le Duc d'Orleans wishes to see his handwriting."

He added, that soon after I had quitted M. le Duc d'Orleans, whilst he was walking at Montmartre in a garden with his Roués and his harlots, some letters had been brought to him by a post-office clerk, to whom he had spoken in private; that afterwards he, Biron, had been called by the Duc, who showed him a letter from the Marquis de Ruffec to his master, dated "Madrid," and charged him, thereupon, with this present commission.

At this recital I felt a mixture of anger and compassion, and I did not constrain myself with Biron.

I had no letters from my son, because I used to burn them, as I did all useless papers. I charged Biron to say to M. le Duc d'Orleans a part of what I felt; that I had not the slightest acquaintance with anybody in Spain; that I begged him at once to despatch a courier there in order to satisfy himself that my son was at Besançon.

Biron, shrugging his shoulders, said all that was very good, but that if I could find a letter from the Marquis de Ruffec it would be much better; adding, that if one turned up and I sent it to him, he would take care that it reached M. le Duc d'Orleans, at table, in spite of the privacy of his suppers. I did not wish to return to the Palais Royal to make a scene there, and dismissed Biron. Fortunately, Madame de St. Simon came in some time after. I related to her this adventure. She found the last letter of the Marquis de Ruffec and we sent it to Biron. It reached the table as he had promised. M. le Duc d'Orleans seized it with eagerness. The joke is that he did not know the handwriting. Not only did he look at the letter but he read it; and as he found it diverting, regaled his company with it; it became the topic of their discourse and entirely removed his suspicions. Upon my return from La Ferté, I found him ashamed of himself, and I rendered him still more so, by what I said to him on the subject.

I learnt afterwards that this Madrid letter and others that followed, came from a sham Marquis de Ruffec, that is to say, from the son of one of Madame's porters, who passed himself off as my son. He pre-

tended that he had quarrelled with me, and wrote to Madame de St. Simon, begging her to intercede for him; and all this that his letters might be seen, and that he might reap substantial benefits from his imposture in the shape of money and consideration. He was a well made fellow, had much address and effrontery, knew the court very well, and had taken care to learn all about our family, so as to speak within limits. He was arrested at Bayonne, at the table of Dadoncourt, who commanded there, and who suddenly formed the resolution, suspecting him not to be a gentleman, upon seeing him eat olives with a fork! When in gaol he confessed who he was. He was not new at the trade and was confined some little time.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Duc tries to raise the Devil—Magical experiments—His religious opinions — Impiety — Reads Rabelais at church — The Duchesse d'Orleans — Her character—Her life with her husband — My discourses with the Duc on the future—My plans of government—A place at choice offered me—I decline the honour—My reason—National bankruptcy — The Duc's anger at my refusal — A final decision.

But to return to M. le Duc d'Orleans.

His curiosity, joined to a false idea of firmness and courage, had early led him to try and raise the devil and make him speak. He left nothing untried, even the wildest reading, to persuade himself there was no God; and yet believed meanwhile in the devil, and hoped to see him and converse with him! This inconsistency is hard to understand, and yet is extremely common. He worked with all sorts of obscure people; and above all with Mirepoix, sub-lieutenant of the Black Musketeers, to find out Satan. They passed whole nights in the quarries of Vanvres and of Vaugirard uttering invocations. M. le Duc d'Orleans, however, admitted to me that he had never succeeded in hearing or seeing anything, and at last had given up this folly.

At first it was only to please Madame d'Argenton, but afterwards from curiosity, that he tried to see the

present and the future in a glass of water; so he said, and he was no liar. To be false and to be a liar are not one and the same thing, though they closely resemble each other, and if he told a lie it was only when hard pressed upon some promise or some business, and in spite of himself, so as to escape from a dilemma.

Although we often spoke upon religion, to which I tried to lead him so long as I had hope of success, I never could unravel the system he had formed for himself, and I ended by becoming persuaded that he wavered unceasingly without forming any religion at all. His passionate desire, like that of his companions in morals, was this, that it would turn out that there is no God; but he had too much enlightenment to be an atheist; who is a particular kind of fool much more rare than is thought. This enlightenment importuned him; he tried to extinguish it and could not. A mortal soul would have been to him a resource; but he could not convince himself of its existence. A God and an immortal soul, threw him into sad straits, and yet he could not blind himself to the truth of both the one and the other. I can say then this, I know of what religion he was not; nothing more. I am sure, however, that he was very ill at ease upon this point, and that if a dangerous illness had overtaken him, and he had had the time, he would have thrown himself into the hands of all the priests and all the capuchins of the town. His great foible was to pride himself upon his impiety and to wish to surpass in that everybody else.

I recollect that one Christmas-time, at Versailles, when he accompanied the King to morning prayers and to the three midnight masses, he surprised the Court by his continued application in reading a volume he had brought with him, and which appeared to be a prayer book. The chief *femme de chambre* of Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, much attached to the family, and very free as all good old domestics are, transfixed with joy at M. le Duc d'Orleans's application to his book, complimented him upon it the next day, in the presence of others. M. le Duc d'Orleans allowed her to go on some time and then said, "You are very silly, Madame Imbert. Do you know what I was reading? It was 'Rabelais,' that I brought with me for fear of being bored."

The effect of this reply may be imagined. The thing was too true, and was pure braggadocio; for, without comparison of the places, or of the things, the music of the chapel was much superior to that of the opera, and to all the music of Europe; and at Christmas it surpassed itself. There was nothing so magnificent as the decoration of the chapel, or the manner in which it was lighted. It was full of people; the arches of the tribune were crowded with the Court ladies, in undress, but ready for conquest. There was nothing so surprising as the beauty of the spectacle. The ears were charmed also. M. le Duc d'Orleans loved music extremely; he could compose, and had amused himself by composing a kind of little opera, La Fare writing the words, which was performed before the King. This music of the chapel, therefore, might well have occu-

pied him in the most agreeable manner, to say nothing of the brilliant scene, without his having recourse to Rabelais. But he must needs play the impious, and the wag.

Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans was another kind of person. She was tall, and in every way majestic; her complexion, her throat, her arms, were admirable; she had a tolerable mouth, with beautiful teeth, somewhat long; and cheeks too broad, and too hanging, which interfered with, but did not spoil, her beauty. What disfigured her most was her eyebrows, which were, as it were, peeled and red, with very little hair; she had, however, fine eyelashes, and well-set, chestnut-coloured hair. Without being hump-backed, or deformed, she had one side larger than the other, and walked awry. This defect in her figure indicated another, which was more troublesome in society, and which inconvenienced herself. She had a good deal of intellect, and spoke with much ability. She said all she wished, and often conveyed her meaning to you without directly expressing it; saying, as it were, what she did not say. Her utterance was, however, slow and embarrassed, so that unaccustomed ears with difficulty followed her.

Every kind of decency and decorum centred themselves in her, and the most exquisite pride was there upon its throne. Astonishment will be felt at what I am going to say, and yet, however, nothing is more strictly true: it is, that at the bottom of her soul she believed that she, bastard of the King, had much honoured M. d'Orleans in marrying him! M. le Duc d'Orleans often laughed at her pride, called her

Madame Lucifer, in speaking to her, and she admitted that the name did not displease her. She always received his advances with coldness, and a sort of superiority of greatness. She was a princess to the back bone, at all hours, and in all places. Yet, at the same time, her timidity was extreme. The King could have made her feel ill with a single severe look; and Madame de Maintenon could have done likewise, perhaps. At all events, Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans trembled before her; and upon the most commonplace matters never replied to either him or her without hesitation, fear printed on her face.

M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans lived an idle, languishing, shameful, indecent, and despised life, abandoned by all the Court. This, I felt, was one of the first things that must be remedied. Accordingly, I induced Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans to make an effort to attract people to her table. She did so, persevering against the coldness and aversion she met with, and in time succeeded in drawing a tolerably numerous company to her dinners. They were of exquisite quality, and people soon got over their first hesitation, when they found everything orderly, free, and unobjectionable. At these dinners, M. d'Orleans kept within bounds, not only in his discourse, but in his behaviour. But oftentimes his ennui led him to Paris, to join in supper parties and debauchery. Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans tried to draw him from these pleasures by arranging small parties at her pretty little villa, l'Etoile (in the park of Versailles), which the King had given to her, and which

she had furnished in the most delightful manner. She loved good cheer, the guests loved it also, and at table she was altogether another person—free, gay, exciting, charming. M. le Duc d'Orleans cared for nothing but noise, and as he threw off all restraint at these parties, there was much difficulty in selecting guests, for the ears of many people would have been much confused at his loose talk, and their eyes much astonished to see him get drunk at the very commencement of the repast, in the midst of those who thought only of amusing and recreating themselves in a decent manner, and who never approached intoxication.

As the King became weaker in health, and evidently drew near his end, I had continued interviews with Madame d'Orleans upon the subject of the regency, the plan of government to be adopted, and the policy he should follow. Hundreds of times before we had reasoned together upon the faults of the Government, and the misfortunes that resulted from them. What we had to do was to avoid those faults, educate the young King in good and national maxims, so that when he succeeded to power he might continue what the Regency had not had time to finish. This, at least, was my idea, and I laboured hard to make it the idea of M. le Duc d'Orleans. As the health of the King diminished I entered more into details; as I will explain.

What I considered the most important thing to be done, was to overthrow entirely the system of government in which Cardinal Mazarin had imprisoned the King and the realm. A foreigner, risen from the dregs

of the people, who thinks of nothing but his own power and his own greatness, cares nothing for the state, except in its relation to himself. He despises its laws, its genius, its advantages: he is ignorant of its rules and its forms; he thinks only of subjugating all, of confounding all, of bringing all down to one level. Richelieu and his successor, Mazarin, succeeded so well in this policy that the nobility, by degrees, became annihilated, as we now see them. The pen and the robe people, on the other hand, were exalted; so that now things have reached such a pretty pass that the greatest lord is without power, and in a thousand different manners is dependent upon the meanest plebeian. It is in this manner that things hasten from one extreme to the other.

My design was to commence by introducing the nobility into the ministry, with the dignity and authority due to them, and by degrees to dismiss the pen and robe people from all employ not purely judicial. In this manner the administration of public affairs would be entirely in the hands of the aristocracy. I proposed to abolish the two offices of secretary of state for the war department, and for foreign affairs, and to supply their place by councils: also, that the offices of the navy should be managed by a council. I insisted upon the distinct and perfect separation of these councils, so that their authority should never be confounded, and the public should never have the slightest trouble in finding out where to address itself for any kind of business.

M. le Duc d'Orleans exceedingly relished my project,

which we much discussed. This point arrived at, it became necessary to debate upon the persons who were to form these councils. I suggested names, which were accepted or set aside, according as they met his approval or disapprobation. "But," said M. le Duc d'Orleans, after we had been a long time at this work, "you propose everybody and never say a word of yourself. What do you wish to be?"

I replied, that it was not for me to propose, still less to choose any office, but for him to see if he wished to employ me, believing me capable, and in that case to determine the place he wished me to occupy. This was at Marly, in his chamber, and I shall never forget it.

After some little debate, that between equals would have been called complimentary, he proposed to me the Presidency of the Council of Finance. But I had good reasons for shrinking from this office. I saw that disordered as the finances had become there was only one remedy by which improvement could be effected; and this was National Bankruptcy. Had I occupied the office, I should have been too strongly tempted to urge this view, and carry it out, but it was a responsibility I did not wish to take upon myself before God and man. Yet, I felt as I said, that to declare the State bankrupt would be the wisest course, and I am bold enough to think, that there is not a man, having no personal interest in the continuance of imposts, who of two evils, viz. vastly increased taxation, and national failure, would not prefer the latter. We were in the condition of a man

who unfortunately must choose between passing twelve or fifteen years in his bed, in continual pain, or having his leg cut off. Who can doubt this? he would prefer the loss of his leg by a painful operation, in order to find himself two months after quite well, free from suffering and in the enjoyment of all his faculties.

I shrunk accordingly from the finances for the reason I have above given, and made M. le Duc d'Orleans so angry by my refusal to accept the office he had proposed to me, that for three weeks he sulked and would not speak to me, except upon unimportant matters.

At the end of that time in the midst of a languishing conversation, he exclaimed, "Very well, then. You stick to your text, you won't have the finances?"

I respectfully lowered my eyes and replied, in a gentle tone, that I thought that question was settled. He could not restrain some complaints, but they were not bitter, nor was he angry, and then rising and taking a few turns in the room, without saying a word, and his head bent, as was his custom when embarrassed, he suddenly spun round upon me, and exclaimed, "But whom shall we put there?"

I suggested the Duc de Noailles, and although the suggestion at first met with much warm opposition from M. le Duc d'Orleans, it was ultimately accepted by him.

The moment after we had settled this point he said to me, "And you! what will you be?" and he pressed me so much to explain myself that I said at last if he would put me in the council of affairs of the interior, I thought I should do better there, than elsewhere.

"Chief, then," replied he with vivacity.

"No, no! not that," said I; "simply a place in the council."

We both insisted, he for, I against. "A place in that council," he said, "would be ridiculous, and cannot be thought of. Since you will not be chief, there is only one post which suits you, and which suits me also. You must be in the council I shall be in,—the Supreme Council."

I accepted the post, and thanked him. From that moment this distinction remained fixed.

I will not enter into all the suggestions I offered to M. le Duc d'Orleans respecting the Regency, or give the details of all the projects I submitted to him. Many of those projects and suggestions were either acted upon only partially, or not acted upon at all, although nearly everyone met with his approval. But he was variable as the winds, and as difficult to hold. In my dealings with him I had to do with a person very different from that estimable Dauphin who was so rudely taken away from us.

But let me, before going further, describe the last days of the King, his illness, and death, adding to the narrative a review of his life and character.

CHAPTER XV.

King's health declines—Bets about his death—Lord Stair—My new friend —The King's last hunt—And last domestic and public acts—Doctors; opium—The king's diet—Failure of his strength—His hopes of recovery—Increased danger—Codicil to his will—Interview with the Duc d'Orleans—With the Cardinal de Noailles—Address to his attendants—The Dauphin brought to him—His last words—An extraordinary physician—The courtiers and the Duc d'Orleans—Conduct of Madame de Maintenon—The King's death.

Louis XIV. began, as I have before remarked, sensibly to decline, and his appetite, which had always been good and uniform, very considerably diminished. Even foreign countries become aware of this. Bets were laid in London that his life would not last beyond the first of September, that is to say about three months, and although the King wished to know everything, it may be imagined that nobody was very eager to make him acquainted with the news. He used to have the Dutch papers read to him in private by Torcy, often after the Council of State. One day as Torcy was reading, coming unexpectedly—for he had not examined the paper—upon the account of these bets, he stopped, stammered, and skipped it. The King, who easily perceived this, asked him the cause of his embarrassment; what he was passing over, and why? Torcy blushed to the very whites of his eyes, and said that it was a piece of impertinence unworthy of being read.

The King insisted; Torcy also: but at last thoroughly confused, he could not resist the reiterated command he received, and read the whole account of the bets. The King pretended not to be touched by it, but he was, and profoundly, so that sitting down to table immediately afterwards, he could not keep himself from speaking of it, though without mentioning the gazette.

This was at Marly, and by chance I was there that day. The King looked at me as at the others, but as though asking for a reply. I took good care not to open my mouth, and lowered my eyes. Cheverny, (a discreet man,) too, was not so prudent, but made a long and ill-timed rhapsody upon similar reports that had come to Copenhagen from Vienna while he was ambassador at the former place seventeen or eighteen years before. The King allowed him to say on, but did not take the bait. He appeared touched, but like a man who does not wish to seem so. It could be seen that he did all he could to eat, and to show that he ate with appetite. But it was also seen that the mouthfuls loitered on their way. This trifle did not fail to augment the circumspection of the Court, above all of those who by their position had reason to be more attentive than the rest. It was reported that an aide-de-camp of Lord Stair, who was then English ambassador of our Court, and very much disliked for his insolent bearing and his troublesome ways, had caused these bets by what he had said in England respecting the health of the King. Stair when told this was much grieved, and said 'twas a scoundrel he had dismissed.

As the King sensibly declined I noticed that although terror of him kept people as much away from M. d'Orleans as ever, I was approached even by the most considerable. I had often amused myself at the expense of these prompt friends; I did so now, and diverted M. d' Orleans by warning him beforehand what he had to expect.

On Friday, the ninth of August, 1715, the King hunted the stag after dinner in his *calèche*, that he drove himself as usual. 'Twas for the last time. Upon his return he appeared much knocked up. There was a grand concert in the evening in Madame de Maintenon's apartment.

On Saturday the tenth of August he walked before dinner in his gardens at Marly; he returned to Versailles about six o'clock in the evening, and never again saw that strange work of his hands. In the evening he worked with the Chancellor in Madame de Maintenon's rooms, and appeared to everybody very ill. On Sunday, the eleventh of August, he held the Council of State, walked after dinner to Trianon, never more to go out again during life.

On the morrow the twelfth of August, he took medicine as usual, and lived as usual the following days. It was known that he complained of sciatica in the leg and thigh. He had never before had sciatica, or rheumatism, or a cold; and for a long time no touch of gout. In the evening there was a little concert in Madame de Maintenon's rooms. This was the last time in his life that he walked alone.

On Tuesday, the thirteenth of August, he made a

violent effort, and gave a farewell audience to a sham Persian ambassador, whom Portchartrain had imposed upon him; this was the last public action of his life. The audience, which was long, fatigued the King. He resisted the desire for sleep which came over him, held the finance council, dined, had himself carried to Madame de Maintenon's, where a little concert was given, and on leaving his cabinet stopped for the Duchesse de la Rochefoucauld, who presented to him the Duchesse de la Rocheguyon, her daughter-in-law, who was the last lady presented to him. She took her tabouret that evening at the King's grand supper, which was the last he ever gave. On the morrow he sent some precious stones to the Persian ambassador just alluded to. It was on this day that the Princesse des Ursins set off for Lyons terrified at the state of the King as I have already related.

For more than a year the health of the King had diminished. His valets noticed this first, and followed the progress of the malady, without one of them daring to open his mouth. The bastards, or to speak exactly, M. du Maine saw it; Madame de Maintenon also; but they did nothing. Fagon, the chief physician, much fallen off in mind and body, was the only one of the King's intimates who saw nothing. Maréchal, also chief physician, spoke to him (Fagon) several times, but was always harshly repulsed. Pressed at last by his duty and his attachment, he made bold one morning towards Whitsuntide to go to Madame de Maintenon. He told her what he saw and how grossly Fagon was mistaken. He assured her that the King

whose pulse he had often felt, had had for some time a slow internal fever; that his constitution was so good that with remedies and attention all would go well, but that if the malady were allowed to grow there would no longer be any resource. Madame de Maintenon grew angry, and all he obtained for his zeal was her anger. She said that only the personal enemies of Fagon could find fault with his opinion upon the King's health, concerning which the capacity, the application, the experience of the chief physician could not be deceived. The best of it is that Maréchal who had formerly operated upon Fagon for stone, had been appointed chief surgeon by him, and they had always lived on the best of terms. Maréchal, annoyed as he related to me, could do nothing more, and began from that time to lament the death of his master. Fagon was in fact the first physician in Europe, but for a long time his health had not permitted him to maintain his experience; and the high point of authority to which his capacity and his favour had carried him, had at last spoiled him. He would not hear reason, or submit to reply, and continued to treat the King as he had treated him in early years; and killed him by his obstinacy.

The gout of which the King had had long attacks, induced Fagon to swaddle him, so to say, every evening in a heap of feather pillows which made him sweat all night to such an extent, that it was necessary in the morning to rub him down and change his linen before the grand chamberlain and the first gentleman of the chamber could enter. For many years he had

drunk nothing but Burgundy wine half mixed with water, and so old that it was used up, instead of the best champagne which he had used all his life. He would pleasantly say sometimes that foreign lords who were anxious to taste the wine he used, were often mightily deceived. At no time had he ever drank pure wine, or made use in any way of spirits or even tea, coffee, or chocolate. Upon rising, instead of a little bread and wine and water, he had taken for a long time two glasses of sage and veronica; often between his meals and always on going to bed, glasses of water with a little orange-flower water in them, and always iced. Even on the days when he had medicine he drank this, and always also at his meals, between which he never ate anything except some cinnamon lozenges that he put into his pocket at his dessert, with a good many cracknels for the bitches he kept in his cabinet.

As during the last year of his life the King became more and more costive, Fagon made him eat at the commencement of his repasts many iced fruits, that is to say, mulberries, melons, and figs rotten from ripeness; and at his dessert many other fruits, finishing with a surprising quantity of sweetmeats. All the year round he ate at supper a prodigious quantity of salad. His soups, several of which he partook of morning and evening, were full of gravy and were of exceeding strength, and everything that was served to him was full of spice, to double the usual extent, and very strong also. This regimen and the sweetmeats together Fagon did not like, and sometimes while seeing the

King eat, he would make most amusing grimaces, without daring however to say anything except now and then to Livry and Benoist, who replied that it was their business to feed the King and his to doctor him. The King never ate any kind of venison or water-fowl, but otherwise partook of everything, fête days and fast days alike, except that during the last twenty years of his life he observed some few days of Lent.

This summer he redoubled his régime of fruits and drinks. At last the former clogged his stomach, taken after soup, weakened the digestive organs and took away his appetite, which until then had never failed him all his life, though however late dinner might be delayed he never was hungry or wanted to eat. But after the first spoonfuls of soup, his appetite came, as I have several times heard him say, and he ate so prodigiously and so solidly morning and evening that no one could get accustomed to see it. So much water and so much fruit unconnected by anything spirituous, turned his blood into gangrene; while those forced night sweats diminished its strength and impoverished it; and thus his death was caused, as was seen by the opening of his body. The organs were found in such good and healthy condition that there is reason to believe he would have lived beyond his hundredth year. His stomach above all astonished, and also his bowels by their volume and extent, double that of the ordinary, whence it came that he was such a great yet uniform eater. Remedies were not thought of until it was no longer time, because Fagon would never believe him ill or Madame de Maintenon either; though

at the same time she had taken good care to provide for her own retreat in the case of his death. Amidst all this, the King felt his state before they felt it, and said so sometimes to his valets: Fagon always reassured him, but did nothing. The King was contented with what was said to him without being persuaded, but his friendship for Fagon restrained him, and Madame de Maintenon still more.

On Wednesday the 14th of August, the King was carried to hear mass for the last time; held the council of state, ate a meat dinner, and had music in Madame de Maintenon's rooms. He supped in his chamber, where the court saw him as at his dinner; was with his family a short time in his cabinet, and went to bed a little after ten.

On Thursday, the Festival of the Assumption, he heard mass in his bed. The night had been disturbed and bad. He dined in his bed the courtiers being present, rose at five and was carried to Madame de Maintenon's where music was played. He supped and went to bed as on the previous evening. As long as he could sit up he did the same.

On Friday, the 16th of August, the night had been no better; much thirst and drink. The King ordered no one to enter until ten. Mass and dinner in his bed as before; then he was carried to Madame de Maintenon's; he played with the ladies there, and afterwards there was a grand concert.

On Saturday, the 17th of August, the night as the preceding. He held the Finance Council, he being in bed; saw people at his dinner, rose immediately after;

gave audience in his cabinet to the General of the order of Sainte-Croix de la Brétonnerie; passed to Madame de Maintenon's, where he worked with the Chancellor. At night, Fagon slept for the first time in his chamber.

Sunday, the 18th of August, passed like the preceding days. Fagon pretended there had been no fever. The King held a Council of State before and after his dinner; worked afterwards upon the fortifications with Pelletier; then passed to Madame de Maintenon's, where there was music.

Monday, the 19th and Tuesday, the 20th of August, passed much as the previous days, excepting that on the latter the King supped in his dressing gown, seated in an arm chair; and that after this evening he never left his room or dressed himself again. That same day Madame de St. Simon, whom I had pressed to return, came back from the waters of Forges. The King, entering after supper into his cabinet, perceived her. He ordered his chair to be stopped; spoke to her very kindly upon her journey and her return; then had himself wheeled on by Bloin into the other cabinet. She was the last Court lady to whom he spoke. I don't count those who were always near him, and who came to him when he could no longer leave his room. Madame de St. Simon said to me in the evening, that she should not have recognised the King if she had met him anywhere else. Yet she had left Marly for Forges only on the 6th of July.

On Wednesday, the 21st of August, four physicians saw the King, but took care to do nothing except

praise Fagon, who gave him cassia. For some days it had been perceived that he ate meat and even bread with difficulty, (though all his life he had eaten but little of the latter, and for some time only the crumb, because he had no teeth). Soup in larger quantity, hash very light, and eggs compensated him; but he ate very sparingly.

On Thursday, the 22nd of August, the King was still worse. He saw four other physicians, who, like the first four, did nothing but admire the learned and admirable treatment of Fagon, who made him take towards evening, some Jesuit bark and water, and intended to give him at night, ass's milk. This same day, the King ordered the Duc de la Rochefoucauld to bring to him his clothes on the morrow, in order that he might choose which he would wear upon leaving off the mourning he wore for a son of Madame la Duchesse de Lorraine. He had not been able to quit his chamber for some days; he could scarcely eat anything solid; his physician slept in his chamber, and yet he reckoned upon being cured, upon dressing himself again, and wished to choose his dress! In like manner there was the same round of councils, of work, of amusements. So true it is, that men do not wish to die, and dissimulate from themselves the approach of death as long as possible. Meanwhile, let me say, that the state of the King, which nobody was ignorant of, had already changed M. d'Orleans' desert into a crowded city.

Friday, the 23rd of August, the night was as usual, the morning also. The King worked with Père Tellier,

who tried, but in vain, to make him fill up several benefices that were vacant; that is to say, Père Tellier wished to dispose of them himself, instead of leaving them to M. le Duc d'Orleans. Let me state at once, that the feebler the King grew, the more Père Tellier worried him; so as not to lose such a rich prey, or miss the opportunity of securing fresh creatures for his service. But he could not succeed. The King declared to him that he had enough to render account of to God, without charging himself with this nomination, and forbade him to speak again upon the subject.

On Saturday evening, the 24th of August, he supped in his dressing-gown, in presence of the courtiers, for the last time. I noticed that he could only swallow liquids, and that he was troubled if looked at. He could not finish his supper, and begged the courtiers to pass on, that is to say, go away. He went to bed, where his leg, on which were several black marks, was examined. It had grown worse lately and had given him much pain. He sent for Père Tellier and made confession. Confusion spread among the doctors at this. Milk, and Jesuit bark and water had been tried and abandoned in turns; now, nobody knew what to try. The doctors admitted that they believed he had had a slow fever ever since Whitsuntide; and excused themselves for doing nothing on the ground that he did not wish for remedies.

On Sunday, the 25th of August, no more mystery was made of the King's danger. Nevertheless, he expressly commanded that nothing should be changed in

the usual order of this day (the fête of St. Louis), that is to say, that the drums and the hautboys, assembled beneath his windows, should play their accustomed music as soon as he awoke, and that the twenty-four violins should play in the ante-chamber during his dinner. He worked afterwards with the Chancellor, who wrote, under his dictation, a codicil to his will, Madame de Maintenon being present. She and M. du Maine, who thought incessantly of themselves, did not consider the King had done enough for them by his will; they wished to remedy this by a codicil, which equally showed how enormously they abused the King's weakness in this extremity, and to what an excess ambition may carry us. By this codicil the King submitted all the civil and military household of the young King to the Duc du Maine, and under his orders to Maréchal de Villeroy, who, by this disposition, became the sole masters of the person and the dwelling-place of the King, and of Paris, by the troops placed in their hands; so that the Regent had not the slightest shadow of authority and was at their mercy; certainly liable to be arrested or worse, any time it should please M. du Maine.

Soon after the Chancellor left the King, Madame de Maintenon who remained, sent for the ladies; and the musicians came at seven o'clock in the evening. But the King fell asleep during the conversation of the ladies. He awoke; his brain confused, which frightened them and made them call the doctors. They found his pulse so bad that they did not hesitate to propose to him, his senses having returned, to take the

sacrament without delay. Père Tellier was sent for; the musicians who had just prepared their books and their instruments, were dismissed, the ladies also; and in a quarter of an hour from that time, the King made confession to Père Tellier, the Cardinal de Rohan, meanwhile, bringing the Holy Sacrament from the Chapel, and sending for the Curé and holy oils. Two of the King's chaplains, summoned by the Cardinal, came, and seven or eight candlesticks were carried by valets. The Cardinal said a word or two to the King upon this great and last action, during which the King appeared very firm, but very penetrated with what he was doing. As soon as he had received Our Saviour and the holy oils, everybody left the chamber except Madame de Maintenon and the Chancellor. Immediately afterwards, and this was rather strange, a kind of book or little tablet was placed upon the bed, the codicil was presented to the King, and at the bottom of it he wrote four or five lines, and restored the document to the Chancellor.

After this, the King sent for M. le Duc d'Orleans, showed him much esteem, friendship, and confidence; but what is terrible, with Jesus Christ still upon his lips—the Sacrament he had just received—he assured him, he would find nothing in his will with which he would not feel pleased. Then he recommended to him the state and the person of the future King.

On Monday the 26th of August, the King called to him the Cardinals de Rohan and de Bissy, protested that he died in the faith, and in submission to the church, then added, looking at them, that he was sorry

to leave the affairs of the church as they were; that they knew he had done nothing except what they wished; that it was therefore for them to answer before God for what he had done; that his own conscience was clear, and that he was as an ignorant man who had abandoned himself entirely to them. What a frightful thunder-bolt was this to the two cardinals; for this was an allusion to the terrible constitution they had assisted Père Tellier in forcing upon him! But their calm was superior to all trial. They praised him and said he had done well, and that he might be at ease as to the result.

This same Monday, 26th of August, after the two Cardinals had left the room, the King dined in his bed in the presence of those who were privileged to enter. As the things were being cleared away, he made them approach and addressed to them these words, which were stored up in their memory,—"Gentlemen, I ask your pardon for the bad example I have given you. I have much to thank you for the manner in which you have served me, and for the attachment and fidelity you have always shown for me. I am very sorry I have not done for you all I should have wished to do; bad times have been the cause. I ask for my grandson the same application and the same fidelity you have had for me. He is a child who may experience many reverses. Let your example be one for all my other subjects. Follow the orders my nephew will give you; he is to govern the realm; I hope he will govern it well; I hope also that you will all contribute to keep up union, and that if any one falls away you will aid

in bringing him back. I feel that I am moved, and that I move you also. I ask your pardon. Adieu, gentlemen, I hope you will sometimes remember me."

A short time after he called the Maréchal de Villeroy to him, and said he had made him governor of the Dauphin. He then called to him M. le Duc and M. le Prince de Conti, and recommended to them the advantages of union among princes. Then, hearing women in the cabinet, questioned who were there, and immediately sent word they might enter. Madame la Duchesse de Berry, Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, and the Princesses of the blood forthwith appeared, crying. The King told them they must not cry thus, said a few friendly words to them, and dismissed them. They retired by the cabinet, weeping and crying very loudly, which caused people to believe outside that the King was dead; and, indeed, the rumour spread to Paris, and even to the provinces.

Sometime after the King requested the Duchesse de Ventadour to bring the little Dauphin to him. He made the child approach, and then said to him, before Madame de Maintenon and the few privileged people present, "My child, you are going to be a great king; do not imitate me in the taste I have had for building, or in that I have had for war; try, on the contrary, to be at peace with your neighbours. Render to God what you owe him; recognise the obligations you are under to him; make him honoured by your subjects. Always follow good counsels; try to comfort your people, which I unhappily have not done. Never forget the obligation you owe to Madame de Ventadour.

Madame (*addressing her*), let me embrace him (*and while embracing him*), my dear child, I give you my benediction with my whole heart."

As the little Prince was about to be taken off the bed, the King redemanded him, embraced him again, and raising hands and eyes to Heaven, blessed him once more. This spectacle was extremely touching.

On Tuesday the 27th of August, the King said to Madame de Maintenon, that he had always heard, it was hard to resolve to die; but that as for him, seeing himself upon the point of death, he did not find this resolution so difficult to form. She replied that it was very hard when we had attachments to creatures, hatred in our hearts, or restitutions to make. "Ah," rejoined the King, "as for restitutions, to nobody in particular do I owe any; but as for those I owe to the realm, I hope in the mercy of God."

The night which followed was very agitated. The King was seen at all moments joining his hands, striking his breast, and was heard repeating the prayers he ordinarily employed.

On Wednesday morning the 28th of August, he paid a compliment to Madame de Maintenon, which pleased her but little, and to which she replied not one word. He said, that what consoled him in quitting her was that, considering the age she had reached, they must soon meet again!

About seven o'clock in the morning, he saw in the mirror two of his valets at the foot of the bed weeping, and said to them, "Why do you weep? Is it because you thought me immortal? As for me, I have not

thought myself so, and you ought, considering my age, to have been prepared to lose me."

A very clownish Provençal rustic heard of the extremity of the King, while on his way from Marseilles to Paris, and came this morning to Versailles with a remedy which, he said, would cure the gangrene. The King was so ill, and the doctors so at their wits' ends, that they consented to receive him. Fagon tried to say something, but this rustic, who was named Le Brun, abused him very coarsely, and Fagon accustomed to abuse others was confounded. Ten drops of Le Brun's mixture in Alicante wine, were therefore given to the King about eleven o'clock in the morning. Sometime after he became stronger, but the pulse falling again and becoming bad, another dose was given to him about four o'clock, to recal him to life, they told him. He replied, taking the mixture, "To life or to death as it shall please God."

Le Brun's remedy was continued. Some one proposed that the King should take some broth. The King replied, that it was not broth he wanted, but a confessor, and he sent for him. One day, recovering from loss of consciousness, he asked Père Tellier to give him absolution for all his sins. Père Tellier asked him if he suffered much? "No," replied the King, "that's what troubles me: I should like to suffer more for the expiation of my sins."

On Thursday, the 29th of August, he grew a little better, he even ate two little biscuits steeped in wine, with a certain appetite. The news immediately spread abroad that the King was recovering. I went that

day to the apartments of M. le Duc d'Orleans, where, during the previous eight days, there had been such a crowd that, speaking exactly, a pin would not have fallen to the ground. Not a soul was there! As soon as the Duc saw me he burst out laughing, and said, I was the first person who had been to see him all the day! And until the evening he was entirely deserted. Such is the world!

In the evening it was known that the King had only recovered for the moment. In giving orders during the day, he called the young Dauphin, "the young King." He saw a movement amongst those around him. "Why not?" said he, "that does not trouble me." Towards eight o'clock he took the elixir of the rustic. His brain appeared confused; he himself said he felt very ill. Towards eleven o'clock his leg was examined. The gangrene was found to be in the foot and the knee; the thigh much inflamed. He swooned during this examination. He had perceived with much pain that Madame de Maintenon was no longer near him. She had in fact gone off on the previous day with very dry eyes to St. Cyr, not intending to return.* He asked for her several times during the day. Her departure could not be hidden. He sent for her to St. Cyr, and she came back in the evening.

Friday, August the 30th, was a bad day preceded by a bad night. The King continually lost his reason. About five o'clock in the evening Madame de Maintenon

* If anything could make Mme. de Maintenon more odious, it is this heartless desertion of the old King in his last moments of agony and penitence.

left him, gave away her furniture to the domestics, and went to St. Cyr never to leave it.

On Saturday, the 31st of August, everything went from bad to worse. The gangrene had reached the knee and all the thigh. Towards eleven o'clock at night the King was found to be so ill that the prayers for the dying were said. This restored him to himself. He repeated the prayers in a voice so strong that it rose above all the other voices. At the end he recognised Cardinal de Rohan, and said to him, "These are the last favours of the church." This was the last man to whom he spoke. He repeated several times, *Nunc et in horá mortis*, then said, "Oh my God, come to my aid: hasten to succour me."

These were his last words. All the night he was without consciousness and in a long agony, which finished on Sunday, the 1st Sept., 1715, at a quarter past eight in the morning, three days before he had accomplished his seventy-seventh year, and in the seventy-second of his reign. He had survived all his sons and his grandsons, except the King of Spain. Europe never saw so long a reign or France a King so old.

CHAPTER XVI.

Early life of Louis XIV.—His education—His enormous vanity—His ignorance—Cause of the war with Holland—His mistakes and weakness in war—The ruin of France—Origin of Versailles—The King's love of adulation and jealousy of people who came not to Court—His spies—His vindictiveness—Opening of letters—Confidence sometimes placed in him—A lady in a predicament.

I SHALL pass over the stormy period of Louis XIV.'s minority. At twenty-three years of age he entered the great world as King, under the most favourable auspices. His ministers were the most skilful in all Europe; his generals the best; his Court was filled with illustrious and clever men, formed during the troubles which had followed the death of Louis XIII.

Louis XIV. was made for a brilliant Court. In the midst of other men, his figure, his courage, his grace, his beauty, his grand mien, even the tone of his voice and the majestic and natural charm of all his person, distinguished him till his death as the King Bee, and showed that if he had only been born a simple private gentleman, he would equally have excelled in fêtes, pleasures, and gallantry, and would have had the greatest success in love. The intrigues and adventures which early in life he had been engaged in—when the Comtesse de Soissons lodged at the Tuileries, as superintendent of the Queen's household, and was

the centre figure of the Court group—had exercised an unfortunate influence upon him: he received those impressions with which he could never after successfully struggle. From this time, intellect, education, nobility of sentiment, and high principle, in others, became objects of suspicion to him, and soon of hatred. The more he advanced in years the more this sentiment was confirmed in him. He wished to reign by himself. His jealousy on this point unceasingly, became weakness. He reigned, indeed, in little things; the great he could never reach: even in the former, too, he was often governed. The superior ability of his early ministers and his early generals soon wearied him. He liked nobody to be in any way superior to him. Thus he chose his ministers, not for their knowledge, but for their ignorance; not for their capacity, but for their want of it. He liked to form them, as he said; liked to teach them even the most trifling things. It was the same with his generals. He took credit to himself for instructing them; wished it to be thought that from his cabinet he commanded and directed all his armies. Naturally fond of trifles, he unceasingly occupied himself with the most petty details of his troops, his household, his mansions; would even instruct his cooks; who received, like novices, lessons they had known by heart for years. This vanity, this unmeasured and unreasonable love of admiration, was his ruin. His ministers, his generals, his mistresses, his courtiers, soon perceived his weakness. They praised him with emulation and spoiled him. Praises, or to say truth, flattery, pleased him to such an extent,

that the coarsest was well received, the vilest even better relished. It was the sole means by which you could approach him. Those whom he liked owed his affection for them, to their untiring flatteries. This is what gave his ministers so much authority, and the opportunities they had for adulating him, of attributing everything to him, and of pretending to learn everything from him. Suppleness, meanness, an admiring, dependent, cringing manner—above all, an air of nothingness—were the sole means of pleasing him.

This poison spread. It spread, too, to an incredible extent, in a prince who, although of intellect beneath mediocrity, was not utterly without sense, and who had had some experience. Without voice or musical knowledge, he used to sing, in private, the passages of the opera prologues that were fullest of his praises! He was drowned in vanity; and so deeply, that at his public suppers—all the Court present, musicians also—he would hum these self-same praises between his teeth, when the music they were set to was played!

And yet, it must be admitted, he might have done better. Though his intellect, as I have said, was beneath mediocrity, it was capable of being formed. He loved glory, was fond of order and regularity; was by disposition prudent, moderate, discreet, master of his movements and his tongue. Will it be believed? He was also by disposition good and just! God had sufficiently gifted him to enable him to be a good King; perhaps even *a tolerably great King!* All the evil came to him from elsewhere. His early education was so neglected that nobody dared approach his

apartment. He has often been heard to speak of those times with bitterness, and even to relate that, one evening he was found in the basin of the Palais Royale garden fountain, into which he had fallen! He was scarcely taught how to read or write, and remained so ignorant, that the most familiar historical and other facts were utterly unknown to him! He fell, accordingly, and sometimes even in public, into the grossest absurdities.

It was his vanity, his desire for glory, that led him, soon after the death of the King of Spain, to make that event the pretext for war; in spite of the renunciations so recently made, so carefully stipulated, in the marriage contract. He marched into Flanders; his conquests there were rapid; the passage of the Rhine was admirable; the triple alliance of England, Sweden, and Holland only animated him. In the midst of winter he took Franche-Comté, by restoring which at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, he preserved his conquests in Flanders. All was flourishing then in the state. Riches everywhere. Colbert had placed the finances, the navy, commerce, manufactures, letters even, upon the highest point; and this age, like that of Augustus, produced in abundance illustrious men of all kinds,—even those illustrious only in pleasures.

Le Tellier, and Louvois his son, who had the war department, trembled at the success and at the credit of Colbert, and had no difficulty in putting into the head of the King a new war, the success of which caused such fear to all Europe that France never recovered from it, and after having been upon the

point of succumbing to this war, for a long time felt the weight and misfortune of it. Such was the real cause of that famous Dutch war, to which the King allowed himself to be pushed, and which his love for Madame de Montespan rendered so unfortunate for his glory and for his kingdom. Everything being conquered, everything taken, and Amsterdam ready to give up her keys, the King yields to his impatience, quits the army, flies to Versailles, and destroys in an instant all the success of his arms! He repaired this disgrace by a second conquest, in person, of Franche-Comté, which this time was preserved by France.

In 1676, the King having returned into Flanders, took Condé; whilst Monsieur took Bouchain. The armies of the King and of the Prince of Orange approached each other so suddenly and so closely, that they found themselves front to front near Heurtebise. According even to the admission of the enemy, our forces were so superior to those of the Prince of Orange, that we must have gained the victory if we had attacked. But the King, after listening to the opinions of his generals, some for, and some against giving battle, decided for the latter, turned tail, and the engagement was talked of no more. The army was much discontented. Everybody wished for battle. The fault therefore of the King made much impression upon the troops, and excited cruel railleries against us at home and in the foreign courts. The King stopped but little longer afterwards in the army, although we were only in the month of May. He returned to his mistress.

The following year he returned to Flanders, and took

Cambrai; and Monsieur besieged Saint Omer. Monsieur got the start of the Prince of Orange, who was about to assist the place, gave him battle near Corsel, obtained a complete victory, immediately took Saint Omer, and then joined the King. This contrast so affected the monarch that never afterwards did he give Monsieur command of an army! External appearances were perfectly kept up, but from that moment the resolution was taken and always well sustained.

The year afterwards the King led in person the siege of Ghent. The peace of Nimeguen ended this year the war with Holland, Spain, &c.; and on the commencement of the following year, that with the Emperor and the empire. America, Africa, the Archipelago, Sicily, acutely felt the power of France, and in 1684 Luxembourg was the price of the delay of the Spaniards in fulfilling all the conditions of the peace. Genoa, bombarded, was forced to come, in the persons of its doge and four of its senators, to sue for peace at the commencement of the following year. From this date, until 1688, the time passed in the cabinet less in fêtes than in devotion and constraint. Here finishes the apogeum of this reign, and the fulness of glory and prosperity. The great captains, the great ministers, were no more, but their pupils remained. The second epoch of the reign was very different from the first; but the third was even more sadly dissimilar.

I have related the adventure which led to the wars of this period; how an ill-made window-frame was

noticed at the Trianon, then building; how Louvois was blamed for it; his alarm lest his disgrace should follow; his determination to engage the King in a war which should turn him from his building fancies. He carried out his resolve: with what result I have already shown. France was ruined at home; and abroad, despite the success of her arms, gained nothing. On the contrary, the withdrawal of the King from Gembloux, when he might have utterly defeated the Prince of Orange, did us infinite harm, as I have shown in its place. The peace which followed this war was disgraceful. The King was obliged to acknowledge the Prince of Orange as King of England, after having so long shown hatred and contempt for him. Our precipitation, too, cost us Luxembourg; and the ignorance of our plenipotentiaries gave our enemies great advantages in forming their frontier. Such was the peace of Ryswick, concluded in September, 1697.

This peace seemed as though it would allow France some breathing time. The King was sixty years of age, and had, in his own opinion, acquired all sorts of glory. But scarcely were we at peace, without having had time to taste it, than the pride of the King made him wish to astonish all Europe by the display of a power that it believed prostrated. And truly he did astonish Europe. But at what a cost! The famous camp of Compiègne —for 'tis to that I allude—was one of the most magnificent spectacles ever seen; but its immense and misplaced prodigality was soon regretted. Twenty years afterwards, some of the regiments who took part in it were still in difficulties from this cause.

Shortly afterwards, by one of the most surprising and unheard-of pieces of good fortune, the crown of Spain fell into the hands of the Duc d'Anjou, grandson of the King. It seemed as though golden days had come back again to France. Only for a little time, however, did it seem so. Nearly all Europe, as it has been seen, banded against France, to dispute the Spanish crown. The King had lost all his good ministers, all his able generals, and had taken good pains they should leave no successors. When war came, then, we were utterly unable to prosecute it with success or honour. We were driven out of Germany, of Italy, of the Low Countries. We could not sustain the war, or resolve to make peace. Every day led us nearer and nearer the brink of the precipice, the terrible depths of which were for ever staring us in the face. A misunderstanding amongst our enemies, whereby England became detached from the grand alliance; the undue contempt of Prince Eugène for our generals, out of which arose the battle of Denain; saved us from the gulf. Peace came, and a peace, too, infinitely better than that we should have ardently embraced if our enemies had agreed amongst themselves beforehand. Nevertheless, this peace cost dear to France, and cost Spain half its territory—Spain, of which the King had said not even a windmill would he yield! But this was another piece of folly he soon repented of.

Thus, we see this monarch grand, rich, conquering, the arbiter of Europe; feared and admired as long as the ministers and captains existed who really deserved

the name. When they were no more, the machine kept moving some time by impulsion, and from their influence. But soon afterwards we saw beneath the surface; faults and errors were multiplied, and decay came on with giant strides; without, however, opening the eyes of that despotic master, so anxious to do everything and direct everything himself, and who seemed to indemnify himself for disdain abroad by increasing fear and trembling at home.

So much for the reign of this vain-glorious monarch. Let me touch now upon some other incidents in his career, and upon some points in his character.

He early showed a disinclination for Paris. The troubles that had taken place there during the minority made him regard the place as dangerous; he wished, too, to render himself venerable, by hiding himself from the eyes of the multitude; all these considerations fixed him at St. Germains soon after the death of the Queen, his mother. It was to that place he began to attract the world by fêtes and gallantries, and by making it felt that he wished to be often seen.

His love for Madame de la Vallière, which was at first kept secret, occasioned frequent excursions to Versailles, then a little card castle, which had been built by Louis XIII.—annoyed, and his suite still more so, at being frequently obliged to sleep in a wretched inn there, after he had been out hunting in the forest of Saint Leger. That monarch rarely slept at Versailles more than one night, and then from necessity; the King, his son, slept there, so that he might be more in private with his mistress; pleasures unknown to

the hero and just man, worthy son of Saint Louis, who built the little château.

These excursions of Louis XIV. by degrees gave birth to those immense buildings he erected at Versailles; and their convenience for a numerous court, so different from the apartments at St. Germains, led him to take up his abode there entirely, shortly after the death of the Queen. He built an infinite number of apartments, which were asked for by those who wished to pay their court to him; whereas at St. Germains nearly everybody was obliged to lodge in the town, and the few who found accommodation at the château were strangely inconvenienced.

The frequent fêtes, the private promenades at Versailles, the journeys, were means on which the King seized in order to distinguish or mortify the courtiers, and thus render them more assiduous in pleasing him. He felt that of real favours he had not enough to bestow, in order to keep up the spirit of devotion; he therefore unceasingly invented all sorts of ideal ones, little preferences and petty distinctions, which answered his purpose as well.

He was exceedingly jealous of the attention paid him. Not only did he notice the presence of the most distinguished courtiers, but those of inferior degree also. He looked to the right and to the left, not only upon rising but upon going to bed, at his meals, in passing through his apartments, or his gardens of Versailles, where alone the courtiers were allowed to follow him; he saw and noticed everybody; not one escaped him, not even those who hoped to remain un-

noticed. He marked well all absentees from the court, found out the reason of their absence, and never lost an opportunity of acting towards them as the occasion might seem to justify. With some of the courtiers (the most distinguished), it was a demerit not to make the court their ordinary abode; with others 'twas a fault to come but rarely; for those who never or scarcely ever came it was certain disgrace. When their names were in any way mentioned, "I do not know them," the King would reply haughtily. Those who presented themselves but seldom were thus characterised: "They are people I never see;" these decrees were irrevocable. He could not bear people who liked Paris.

Louis XIV. took great pains to be well informed of all that passed everywhere; in the public places, in the private houses, in society and familiar intercourse. His spies and tell-tales were infinite. He had them of all species; many who were ignorant that their information reached him; others who knew it; others who wrote to him direct, sending their letters through channels he indicated; and all these letters were seen by him alone, and always before everything else; others who sometimes spoke to him secretly in his cabinet, entering by the back stairs. These unknown means ruined an infinite number of people of all classes, who never could discover the cause; often ruined them very unjustly; for the King, once prejudiced, never altered his opinion, or so rarely, that nothing was more rare. He had, too, another fault, very dangerous for others and often for himself, since it deprived him of good subjects. He had an excellent

memory; in this way, that if he saw a man who twenty years before, perhaps, had in some manner offended him, he did not forget the man, though he might forget the offence. This was enough however to exclude the person from all favour. The representations of a minister, of a general, of his confessor even, could not move the King. He would not yield.

The most cruel means by which the King was informed of what was passing—for many years before anybody knew it—was that of opening letters. The promptitude and dexterity with which they were opened passes understanding. He saw extracts from all the letters in which there were passages that the chiefs of the post-office, and then the minister who governed it, thought ought to go before him; entire letters, too, were sent to him, when their contents seemed to justify the sending. Thus the chiefs of the post, nay, the principal clerks were in a position to suppose what they pleased and against whom they pleased. A word of contempt against the King or the government, a joke, a detached phrase, was enough. It is incredible how many people, justly or unjustly, were more or less ruined, always without resource, without trial, and without knowing why. The secret was impenetrable; for nothing ever cost the King less than profound silence and dissimulation.

This last talent he pushed almost to falsehood, but never to deceit, pluming himself upon keeping his word,—therefore he scarcely ever gave it. The secrets of others he kept as religiously as his own. He was even flattered by certain confessions and certain con-

fidences; and there was no mistress, minister, or favourite who could have wormed them out, even though the secret regarded themselves.

We know, amongst many others, the famous story of a woman of quality, who, after having been separated a year from her husband, found herself in the family-way just as he was on the point of returning from the army, and who, not knowing what else to do, in the most urgent manner begged a private interview of the King. She obtained it, and confided to him her position, as to the worthiest man in his realm, as she said. The King counselled her to profit by her distress, and live more wisely for the future, and immediately promised to retain her husband on the frontier as long as was necessary, and to forbid his return under any pretext, and in fact he gave orders the same day to Louvois, and prohibited the husband not only all leave of absence, but forbade him to quit for a single day the post he was to command all the winter. The officer, who was distinguished, and who had neither wished nor asked to be employed all the winter upon the frontier, and Louvois, who had in no way thought of it, were equally surprised and vexed. They were obliged, however, to obey to the letter, and without asking why; and the King never mentioned the circumstance until many years afterwards, when he was quite sure nobody could find out either husband or wife, as in fact they never could, or even obtain the most vague or the most uncertain suspicion.

CHAPTER XVII.

Excessive politeness—Influence of the valets—How the King drove out—Love of magnificence—His buildings—Versailles—The supply of water—The King seeks for quiet—Creation of Marly—Tremendous extravagance.

Never did man give with better grace than Louis XIV., or augmented so much, in this way, the price of his benefits. Never did man sell to better profit his words, even his smiles,—nay, his looks. Never did disobliging words escape him; and if he had to blame, to reprimand, or correct, which was very rare, it was nearly always with goodness, never, except on one occasion (the admonition of Courtenvaux, related in its place), with anger or severity. Never was man so naturally polite, or of a politeness so measured, so graduated, so adapted to person, time, and place. Towards women his politeness was without parallel. Never did he pass the humblest petticoat without raising his hat; even to chambermaids, that he knew to be such, as often happened at Marly. For ladies he took his hat off completely, but to a greater or less extent; for titled people half off, holding it in his hand or against his ear some instants, more or less marked. For the nobility he contented himself by putting his hand to his hat. He took it off for the princes of the blood, as for the ladies. If he accosted ladies he did not

cover himself until he had quitted them. All this was out of doors, for in the house he was never covered. His reverences, more or less marked, but always light, were incomparable for their grace and manner; even his mode of half raising himself at supper for each lady who arrived at table. Though at last this fatigued him, yet he never ceased it; the ladies who were to sit down, however, took care not to enter after supper had commenced.

If he was made to wait for anything while dressing, it was always with patience. He was exact to the hours that he gave for all his day, with a precision clear and brief in his orders. If in the bad weather of winter, when he could not go out, he went to Madame de Maintenon's a quarter of an hour earlier than he had arranged (which seldom happened), and the captain of the guards was not on duty, he did not fail afterwards to say that it was his own fault for anticipating the hour, not that of the captain of the guards for being absent. Thus, with this regularity which he never deviated from, he was served with the utmost exactitude.

He treated his valets well, above all those of the household. It was amongst them that he felt most at ease, and that he unbosomed himself the most familiarly, especially to the chiefs. Their friendship and their aversion have often had grand results. They were unceasingly in a position to render good and bad offices: thus they recalled those powerful enfranchised slaves of the Roman emperors, to whom the senate and the great people paid court and basely truckled.

These valets during Louis XIV.'s reign were not less courted. The ministers, even the most powerful, openly studied their caprices; and the princes of the blood,—nay, the bastards,—not to mention people of lower grade, did the same. The majority were accordingly insolent enough; and if you could not avoid their insolence, you were forced to put up with it.

The King loved air and exercise very much, as long as he could make use of them. He had excelled in dancing, and at tennis and mall. On horseback he was admirable, even at a late age. He liked to see everything done with grace and address. To acquit yourself well or ill before him was a merit or a fault. He said that with things not necessary it was best not to meddle, unless they were done well. He was very fond of shooting, and there was not a better or more graceful shot than he. He had always in his cabinet seven or eight pointer bitches, and was fond of feeding them, to make himself known to them. He was very fond, too, of stag hunting; but in a calèche, since he broke his arm, while hunting at Fontainebleau, immediately after the death of the Queen. He rode alone in a species of "box," drawn by four little horses—with five or six relays, and drove himself with an address and accuracy unknown to the best coachmen. His postillions were children from ten to fifteen years of age, and he directed them.

He liked splendour, magnificence, and profusion in everything; you pleased him if you shone through the brilliancy of your houses, your clothes, your table, your equipages. Thus a taste for extravagance and

luxury was disseminated through all classes of society; causing infinite harm, and leading to general confusion of rank and to ruin.

As for the King himself, nobody ever approached his magnificence. His buildings, who could number them? At the same time, who was there who did not deplore the pride, the caprice, the bad taste seen in them? He built nothing useful or ornamental in Paris, except the Pont Royal, and that simply by necessity; so that despite its incomparable extent, Paris is inferior to many cities of Europe. St. Germains, a lovely spot, with a marvellous view, rich forest, terraces, gardens, and water he abandoned for Versailles! the dullest and most ungrateful of all places, without prospect, without wood, without water, without soil; for the ground is all shifting sand or swamp, the air accordingly bad.

But he liked to subjugate nature by art and treasure. He built at Versailles, on, on, without any general design, the beautiful and the ugly, the vast and the mean, all jumbled together. His own apartments and those of the Queen, are inconvenient to the last degree, dull, close, stinking. The gardens astonish by their magnificence, but cause regret by their bad taste. You are introduced to the freshness of the shade only by a vast torrid zone, at the end of which there is nothing for you but to mount or descend; and with the hill, which is very short, terminate the gardens. The violence everywhere done to nature repels and wearies us despite ourselves. The abundance of water, forced up and gathered together from all parts, is rendered green,

thick, muddy; it disseminates humidity, unhealthy and evident; and an odour still more so. I might never finish upon the monstrous defects of a palace so immense and so immensely dear, with its accompaniments, which are still more so.

But the supply of water for the fountains was all defective at all moments, in spite of those seas of reservoirs, which had cost so many millions to establish and to form upon the shifting sand and marsh. Who could have believed it? This defect became the ruin of the infantry which was turned out to do the work. Madame de Maintenon reigned. M. de Louvois was well with her, then. We were at peace. He conceived the idea of turning the river Eure between Chartres and Maintenon, and of making it come to Versailles. Who can say what gold and men this obstinate attempt cost during several years, until it was prohibited by the heaviest penalties, in the camp established there, and for a long time kept up; not to speak of the sick,—above all, of the dead,—that the hard labour and still more the much disturbed earth, caused? How many men were years in recovering from the effects of the contagion! How many never regained their health at all! And not only the sub-officers, but the colonels, the brigadiers and general officers, were compelled to be upon the spot, and were not at liberty to absent themselves a quarter of an hour from the works. The war at last interrupted them in 1688, and they have never since been undertaken; only unfinished portions of them exist which will immortalise this cruel folly.

At last, the King tired of the cost and bustle, per-

suaded himself that he should like something little and solitary. He searched all around Versailles for some place to satisfy this new taste. He examined several neighbourhoods, he traversed the hills near St. Germains, and the vast plain which is at the bottom, where the Seine winds and bathes the feet of so many towns, and so many treasures in quitting Paris. He was pressed to fix himself at Lucienne, where Cavoye afterwards had a house, the view from which is enchanting; but he replied that, that fine situation would ruin him, and that as he wished to go to no expense, so he also wished a situation which would not urge him into any. He found behind Lucienne a deep narrow valley, completely shut in, inaccessible from its swamps, and with a wretched village called Marly upon the slope of one of its hills. This closeness, without drain or the means of having any, was the sole merit of the valley. The king was overjoyed at his discovery. It was a great work, that of draining this sewer of all the environs, which threw there their garbage, and of bringing soil thither! The hermitage was made. At first, it was only for sleeping in three nights, from Wednesday to Saturday, two or three times a-year, with a dozen at the outside of courtiers, to fill the most indispensable posts.

By degrees, the hermitage was augmented, the hills were pared and cut down, to give at least the semblance of a prospect; in fine, what with buildings, gardens, waters, aqueducts, the curious and well known machine, statues, precious furniture, the park, the ornamental enclosed forest,—Marly has become what

it is to-day, though it has been stripped since the death of the King. Great trees were unceasingly brought from Compiègne or farther, three-fourths of which died and were immediately after replaced; vast spaces covered with thick wood, or obscure alleys, were suddenly changed into immense pieces of water, on which people were rowed in gondolas; then they were changed again into forest (I speak of what I have seen in six weeks); basins were changed a hundred times; cascades the same; carp ponds adorned with the most exquisite painting, scarcely finished, were changed and differently arranged by the same hands; and this an infinite number of times; then there was that prodigious machine just alluded to, with its immense aqueducts, the conduit, its monstrous resources solely devoted to Marly, and no longer to Versailles; so that I am under the mark in saying that Versailles, even, did not cost so much as Marly.

Such was the fate of a place the abode of serpents, and of carrion, of toads and frogs, solely chosen to avoid expense. Such was the bad taste of the King in all things, and his proud haughty pleasure in forcing nature; which neither the most mighty war, nor devotion could subdue!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Amours of the King—La Vallière—Montespan—Scandalous publicity—Temper of Madame de Montespan—Her unbearable haughtiness—Other mistresses—Madame de Maintenon—Her fortunes—Her marriage with Scarron—His character and society—How she lived after his death—Gets into better company—Acquaintance with Madame de Montespan—The King's children—His dislike of widow Scarron—Purchase of the Maintenon estate—Further demands—M. du Maine on his travels—Montespan's ill-humour—Madame de Maintenon supplants her—Her bitter annoyance—Progress of the new intrigue—Marriage of the King and Madame de Maintenon.

Let me now speak of the amours of the King which were even more fatal to the state than his building mania. Their scandal filled all Europe, stupified France, shook the state, and without doubt drew upon the King those maledictions under the weight of which he was pushed so near the very edge of the precipice, and had the misfortune of seeing his legitimate posterity within an ace of extinction in France. These are evils which became veritable catastrophes and which will be long felt.

Louis XIV., in his youth more made for love than any of his subjects—being tired of gathering passing sweets, fixed himself at last upon La Vallière. The progress and the result of his love are well known.

Madame de Montespan was she whose rare beauty touched him next, even during the reign of Madame de La Vallière. She soon perceived it, and vainly

pressed her husband to carry her away into Guienne. With foolish confidence he refused to listen to her. She spoke to him more in earnest. In vain. At last the King was listened to, and carried her off from her husband, with that frightful hubbub which resounded with horror among all nations, and which gave to the world the new spectacle of two mistresses at once! The King took them to the frontiers, to the camps, to the armies, both of them in the Queen's coach. The people ran from all parts to look at the three queens; and asked each other in their simplicity if they had seen them. In the end, Madame de Montespan triumphed, and disposed of the master and his Court with an éclat that knew no veil; and in order that nothing should be wanting to complete the license of this life, M. de Montespan was sent to the Bastille; then banished to Guienne, and his wife was appointed superintendent of the Queen's household.

The accouchements of Madame de Montespan were public. Her circle became the centre of the Court, of the amusements, of the hopes and of the fears of ministers and the generals, and the humiliation of all France. It was also the centre of wit, and of a kind so peculiar, so delicate, and so subtle, but always so natural and so agreeable, that it made itself distinguished by its special character.

Madame de Montespan was cross, capricious, ill-tempered, and of a haughtiness in everything which reached to the clouds, and from the effects of which nobody, not even the King was exempt. The courtiers avoided passing under her windows, above all when

the King was with her. They used to say it was equivalent to being put to the sword, and this phrase became proverbial at the Court. It is true that she spared nobody, often without other design than to divert the King; and as she had infinite wit and sharp pleasantry, nothing was more dangerous than the ridicule she, better than anybody, could cast on all. With that she loved her family and her relatives, and did not fail to serve people for whom she conceived friendship. The Queen endured with difficulty her haughtiness—very different from the respect and measure with which she had been treated by the Duchesse de La Vallière, whom she always loved; whereas of Madame de Montespan she would say, "That strumpet will cause my death." The retirement, the austere penitence, and the pious end of Madame de Montespan have been already described.

During her reign she did not fail to have causes for jealousy. There was Mademoiselle de Fontange, who pleased the King sufficiently to become his mistress. But she had no intellect, and without that it was impossible to maintain supremacy over the King. Her early death quickly put an end to this amour. Then there was Madame de Soubise, who by the infamous connivance of her husband, prostituted herself to the King, and thus secured all sorts of advantages for that husband, for herself, and for her children. The love of the King for her continued until her death, although for many years before that he had ceased to see her in private. Then there was the beautiful Ludre, demoiselle of Lorraine, and maid of

honour to Madame, who was openly loved for a moment. But this amour was a flash of lightning, and Madame de Montespan remained triumphant.

Let us now pass to another kind of amour which astonished all the world as much as the other had scandalised it, and which the King carried with him to the tomb. Who does not already recognise the celebrated Francoise d'Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon, whose permanent reign did not last less than thirty-two years ?

Born in the American islands, where her father, perhaps a gentleman, had gone to seek his bread, and where he was stifled by obscurity, she returned alone and at haphazard into France. She landed at La Rochelle, and was received in pity by Madame de Neuillant, mother of the Maréchale Duchesse de Navailles, and was reduced by that avaricious old woman to keep the keys of her granary, and to see the hay measured out to her horses, as I have already related elsewhere. She came afterwards to Paris, young, clever, witty, and beautiful, without friends and without money ; and by lucky chance made acquaintance with the famous Scarron. He found her amiable ; his friends perhaps still more so. Marriage with this joyous and learned cripple appeared to her the greatest and most unlooked-for good fortune ; and folks who were, perhaps, more in want of a wife than he, persuaded him to marry her, and thus raise this charming unfortunate from her misery.

The marriage being brought about the new spouse pleased the company which went to Scarron's house.

It was the fashion to go there: people of wit, people of the Court and of the city, the best and most distinguished went. Scarron was not in a state to leave his house, but the charm of his genius, of his knowledge, of his imagination, of that incomparable and ever fresh gaiety which he showed in the midst of his afflictions, that rare fecundity, and that humour, tempered by so much good taste, that is still admired in his writings, drew everybody there.

Madame Scarron made at home all sorts of acquaintances, which, however, at the death of her husband did not keep her from being reduced to the charity of the parish of St. Eustace. She took a chamber for herself and for a servant, where she lived in a very pinched manner. Her personal charms by degrees improved her condition. Villars, father of the Maréchal; Beuvron, father of d'Harcourt; the three Villarceaux, and many others kept her.

This set her afloat again, and, step by step, introduced her to the Hôtel d'Albret, and thence to the Hôtel de Richelieu, and elsewhere; so she passed from one house to the other. In these houses Madame Scarron was far from being on the footing of the rest of the company. She was more like a servant than a guest. She was completely at the beck and call of her hosts: now to ask for firewood; now if a meal was nearly ready; another time if the coach of so-and-so or such-a-one had returned; and so on, with a thousand little commissions which the use of bells, introduced a long time after, differently disposes of.

It was in these houses, principally in the Hôtel de

Richelieu, much more still in the Hôtel d'Albret, where the Maréchal d'Albret lived in great state, that Madame Scarron made the majority of her acquaintances. The Maréchal was cousin-german of M. de Montespan, very intimate with him, and with Madame de Montespan. When she became the King's mistress he became her counsellor, and abandoned her husband.

To the intimacy between the Maréchal d'Albret and Madame de Montespan, Madame de Maintenon owed the good fortune she met with fourteen or fifteen years later. Madame de Montespan continually visited the Hôtel d'Albret, and was much impressed with Madame Scarron. She conceived a friendship for the obliging widow, and when she had her first children by the King—M. du Maine and Madame la Duchesse, whom the King wished to conceal—she proposed that they should be confided to Madame Scarron. A house in the Marais was accordingly given to her, to lodge in with them, and the means to bring them up, but in the utmost secrecy. Afterwards, these children were taken to Madame de Montespan, then shown to the King, and then by degrees drawn from secrecy and avowed. Their governess, being established with them at the Court, more and more pleased Madame de Montespan, who several times made the King give presents to her. He, on the other hand, could not endure her; what he gave to her, always little, was by excess of complaisance and with a regret that he did not hide.

The estate of Maintenon being for sale, Madame de

Montespan did not let the King rest until she had drawn from him enough to buy it for Madame Scarron, who thenceforth assumed its name. She obtained enough also for the repair of the château, and then attacked the King for means to arrange the garden, which the former owners had allowed to go to ruin.

It was at the toilette of Madame de Montespan that these demands were made. The captain of the guards alone followed the King there. M. le Maréchal de Lorges, the truest man that ever lived, held that post then, and he has often related to me the scene he witnessed. The King at first turned a deaf ear to the request of Madame de Montespan, and then refused. Annoyed that she still insisted, he said, he had already done more than enough for this creature; that he could not understand the fancy of Madame de Montespan for her, and her obstinacy in keeping her after he had begged her so many times to dismiss her; that he admitted Madame Scarron was insupportable to him, and provided he never saw her more and never heard speak of her, he would open his purse again though to say truth he had already given too much to a creature of this kind! Never did M. le Maréchal de Lorges forget these words; and he has always repeated them to me and others precisely as they are given here, so struck was he with them, and much more after all that he saw since, so astonishing and so contradictory. Madame de Montespan stopped short, very much troubled by having too far pressed the King.

M. du Maine was extremely lame; this was caused, it was said, by a fall he had had from his nurse's arms.

Nothing done for him succeeded; the resolution was then taken to send him to various practicians in Flanders, and elsewhere in the realm, then to the waters, among others to Barèges. The letters that the governess wrote to Madame de Montespan, giving an account of these journeys, were shown to the King. He thought them well written, relished them, and the last ones made his aversion for the writer diminish.

The ill humour of Madame de Montespan finished the work. She had a good deal of that quality, and had become accustomed to give it full swing. The King was the object of it more frequently than anybody; he was still amorous; but her ill humour pained him. Madame de Maintenon reproached Madame de Montespan for this, and thus advanced herself in the King's favour. The King, by degrees, grew accustomed to speak sometimes to Madame de Maintenon; to unbosom to her what he wished her to say to Madame de Montespan: at last to relate to her the chagrins this latter caused him, and to consult her thereupon.

Admitted thus into the intimate confidence of the lover and the mistress, and this by the King's own doing, the adroit waiting-woman knew how to cultivate it, and profited so well by her industry that by degrees she supplanted Madame de Montespan, who perceived too late that her friend had become necessary to the King. Arrived at this point, Madame de Maintenon made in her turn complaints to the King of all she had to suffer, from a mistress who spared even him so little; and by dint of these mutual complaints about

Madame de Montespan, Madame de Maintenon at last took her place, and knew well how to keep it.

Fortune, I dare not say Providence, which was preparing for the haughtiest of kings, humiliation the most profound, the most public, the most durable, the most unheard-of, strengthened more and more his taste for this woman, so adroit and expert at her trade; while the continued ill humour and jealousy of Madame de Montespan rendered the new union still more solid. It was this that Madame de Sevigné so prettily paints, enigmatically, in her letters to Madame de Grignan, in which she sometimes talks of these Court movements; for Madame de Maintenon had been in Paris in the society of Madame de Sévigné, of Madame de Coulange, of Madame de La Fayette, and had begun to make them feel her importance. Charming touches are to be seen in the same style upon the favour, veiled but brilliant, enjoyed by Madame de Soubise.

It was while the King was in the midst of his partiality for Madame de Maintenon that the Queen died. It was at the same time, too, that the ill humour of Madame de Montespan became more and more insupportable. This imperious beauty, accustomed to domineer and to be adored, could not struggle against the despair which the prospect of her fall caused her. What carried her beyond all bounds, was that she could no longer disguise from herself, that she had an abject rival whom she had supported, who owed everything to her; whom she had so much liked that she had several times refused to dismiss her when pressed to do so by the King; a rival, too, so beneath her in

beauty, and older by several years; to feel that it was this lady's-maid, not to say this servant, that the King most frequently went to see; that he sought only her: that he could not dissimulate his uneasiness if he did not find her; that he quitted all for her; in fine, that at all moments she (Madame de Montespan) needed the intervention of Madame de Maintenon, in order to attract the King to reconcile her with him, or to obtain the favours she asked for. It was then, in times so propitious to the enchantress, that the King became free by the death of the Queen.

He passed the first few days at Saint Cloud, at Monsieur's, whence he went to Fontainebleau, where he spent all the autumn. It was there that his liking, stimulated by absence, made him find that absence insupportable. Upon his return it is pretended—for we must distinguish the certain from that which is not so—it is pretended, I say, that the King spoke more freely to Madame de Maintenon, and that she venturing to put forth her strength, retrenched herself behind devotion and prudery; that the King did not cease, that she preached to him and made him afraid of the devil, and that she balanced his love against his conscience with so much art, that she succeeded in becoming what our eyes have seen her, but what posterity will never believe she was.

But what is very certain and very true, is, that some time after the return of the King from Fontainebleau, and in the midst of the winter that followed the death of the Queen (posterity will with difficulty believe it although perfectly true and proved), Père de la Chaise,

confessor of the King, said mass at the dead of night in one of the King's cabinets at Versailles. Bontems, governor of Versailles, chief valet on duty, and the most confidential of the four, was present at this mass, at which the monarch and La Maintenon were married in presence of Harlay, archbishop of Paris, as diocesan, of Louvois (both of whom drew from the King a promise that he would never declare this marriage), and of Montchevreuil. This last was relative and friend of Villarceaux, to whom during the summer he lent his house at Montchevreuil, remaining there himself, however, with his wife; and in that house Villarceaux kept Madame Scarron, paying all the expenses because his relative was poor, and because he (Villarceaux) was ashamed to take her to his own home, to live in concubinage with her in the presence of his wife whose patience and virtue he respected.

The satiety of the honeymoon, usually so fatal, and especially the honeymoon of such marriages, only consolidated the favour of Madame de Maintenon. Soon after, she astonished everybody by the apartments given to her at Versailles, at the top of the grand staircase facing those of the King and on the same floor. From that moment the King always passed some hours with her every day of his life; wherever she might be she was always lodged near him, and on the same floor if possible.

What manner of person she was,—this incredible enchantress,—and how she governed all-powerfully for more than thirty years, it behoves me now to explain!

CHAPTER XIX.

Character of Madame de Maintenon—Her conversation—Her narrow-mindedness—Her devotion—Revocation of the edict of Nantes—Its fatal consequences—St. Cyr—Madame de Maintenon desires her marriage to be declared—Her schemes—Counterworked by Louvois—His vigorous conduct and sudden death—Behaviour of the King—Extraordinary death of Séron.

Madame de Maintenon was a woman of much wit, which the good company, in which she had at first been merely suffered, but in which she soon shone, had much polished; and ornamented with knowledge of the world, and which gallantry had rendered of the most agreeable kind. The various positions she had held, had rendered her flattering, insinuating, complaisant, always seeking to please. The need she had of intrigues, those she had seen of all kinds, and been mixed up in for herself and for others, had given her the taste, the ability, and the habit of them. Incomparable grace, an easy manner, and yet measured and respectful, which in consequence of her long obscurity had become natural to her, marvellously aided her talents; with language gentle, exact, well expressed, and naturally eloquent and brief. Her best time, for she was three or four years older than the King, had been the dainty phrase period,—the superfine gallantry

days,—in a word, the time of the "Ruelles,"* as it was called; and it had so influenced her that she always retained evidences of it. She put on afterwards an air of importance, but this gradually gave place to one of devoutness that she wore admirably. She was not absolutely false by disposition, but necessity had made her so, and her natural flightiness made her appear twice as false as she was.

The distress and poverty in which she had so long lived had narrowed her mind, and abased her heart and her sentiments. Her feelings and her thoughts were so circumscribed, that she was in truth always less even than Madame Scarron, and in everything and everywhere she found herself such. Nothing was more repelling than this meanness, joined to a situation so radiant.

Her flightiness or inconstancy was of the most dangerous kind. With the exception of some of her old friends, to whom she had good reasons for remaining faithful, she favoured people one moment only to cast them off the next. You were admitted to an audience with her for instance, you pleased her in some manner, and forthwith she unbosomed herself to you as though you had known her from childhood. At the second audience you found her dry, laconic, cold. You racked your brains to discover the cause of this change. Mere loss of time!—Flightiness was the sole reason of it.

* *Ruelle* is, properly speaking, the space left between the bed and the wall, where intimate visitors sometimes sat; but it came by degrees to signify any little *sanctum* where ladies received their gossips.

Devoutness was her strong point; by that she governed and held her place. She found a King who believed himself an apostle, because he had all his life persecuted Jansenism, or what was presented to him as such. This indicated to her with what grain she could sow the field most profitably.

The profound ignorance in which the King had been educated and kept all his life, rendered him from the first an easy prey to the Jesuits. He became even more so with years, when he grew devout, for he was devout with the grossest ignorance. Religion became his weak point. In this state it was easy to persuade him that a decisive and tremendous blow struck against the Protestants, would give his name more grandeur than any of his ancestors had acquired, besides strengthening his power and increasing his authority. Madame de Maintenon was one of those who did most to make him believe this.

The revocation of the edict of Nantes, without the slightest pretext or necessity, and the various proscriptions that followed it, were the fruits of a frightful plot, in which the new spouse was one of the chief conspirators, and which depopulated a quarter of the realm, ruined its commerce, weakened it in every direction, gave it up for a long time to the public and avowed pillage of the dragoons, authorised torments and punishments by which so many innocent people of both sexes were killed by thousands; ruined a numerous class; tore in pieces a world of families; armed relatives against relatives, so as to seize their property and leave them to die of hunger; banished our manu-

factures to foreign lands, made those lands flourish and overflow at the expense of France, and enabled them to build new cities; gave to the world the spectacle of a prodigious population proscribed, stripped, fugitive, wandering, without crime, and seeking shelter far from its country; sent to the galleys, nobles, rich old men, people much esteemed for their piety, learning, and virtue, people well off, weak, delicate, and solely on account of religion; in fact, to heap up the measure of horror, filled all the realm with perjury and sacrilege, in the midst of the echoed cries of these unfortunate victims of error, while so many others sacrificed their conscience to their wealth and their repose, and purchased both by simulated abjuration, from which without pause they were dragged to adore what they did not believe in, and to receive the divine body of the Saint of Saints whilst remaining persuaded that they were only eating bread which they ought to abhor! Such was the general abomination born of flattery and cruelty. From torture to abjuration, and from that to the communion, there was often only twenty-four hours' distance; and executioners were the conductors of the converts and their witnesses. Those who in the end appeared to have been reconciled, more at leisure did not fail by their flight or their behaviour, to contradict their pretended conversion.

The King received from all sides news and details of these persecutions and of these conversions. It was by thousands that those who had abjured and taken the communion were counted; ten thousand in one place; six thousand in another—all at once and instantly.

The King congratulated himself on his power and his piety. He believed himself to have renewed the days of the preaching of the Apostles, and attributed to himself all the honour. The Bishops wrote panegyrics of him; the Jesuits made the pulpit resound with his praises. All France was filled with horror and confusion; and yet there never was so much triumph and joy—never such profusion of laudations! The monarch doubted not of the sincerity of this crowd of conversions; the converters took good care to persuade him of it and to beatify him beforehand. He swallowed their poison in long draughts. He had never yet believed himself so great in the eyes of man, or so advanced in the eyes of God, in the reparation of his sins and of the scandals of his life. He heard nothing but eulogies, while the good and true Catholics and the true Bishops, groaned in spirit to see the orthodox act towards error and heretics as heretical tyrants and heathens had acted against the truth, the confessors, and the martyrs. They could not above all endure this immensity of perjury and sacrilege. They bitterly lamented the durable and irremediable odium that detestable measure cast upon the true religion, whilst our neighbours exulting to see us thus weaken and destroy ourselves, profited by our madness, and built designs upon the hatred we should draw upon ourselves from all the Protestant powers.

But to these speaking truths, the King was inaccessible. Even the conduct of Rome in this matter, could not open his eyes. That Court which formerly had not been ashamed to extol the Saint Bartholomew,

to thank God for it by public processions, to employ the greatest masters to paint this execrable action in the Vatican; Rome, I say, would not give the slightest approbation to this onslaught on the Huguenots.

The magnificent establishment of Saint Cyr, followed closely upon the revocation of the edict of Nantes. Madame de Montespan had founded at Paris an establishment for the instruction of young girls in all sorts of fine and ornamental work. Emulation gave Madame de Maintenon higher and vaster views which, whilst gratifying the poor nobility, would cause her to be regarded as a protectress in whom all the nobility would feel interested. She hoped to smooth the way for a declaration of her marriage, by rendering herself illustrious by a monument with which she could amuse both the King and herself, and which might serve her as a retreat if she had the misfortune to lose him, as in fact it happened.

This declaration of her marriage was always her most ardent desire. She wished above all things to be proclaimed Queen; and never lost sight of the idea. Once she was near indeed upon seeing it gratified. The King had actually given her his word, that she should be declared; and the ceremony was forthwith about to take place. But it was postponed, and for ever, by the representations of Louvois to the King. To this interference that minister owed his fall, and under circumstances so surprising and so strange, that I cannot do better, I think, than introduce an account of them here, by way of episode. They are all the more interesting because they show what unlimited power

Madame de Maintenon exercised by subterranean means, and with what patient perseverance she undermined her enemies when once she had resolved to destroy them.

Louvois had gained the confidence of the King to such an extent, that he was, as I have said, one of the two witnesses of the frightful marriage of his Majesty with Madame de Maintenon. He had the courage to show he was worthy of this confidence, by representing to the King, the ignominy of declaring that marriage, and drew from him his word, that never in his life would he do so.

Several years afterwards, Louvois, who took care to be well informed of all that passed in the palace, found out that Madame de Maintenon had been again scheming in order to be declared Queen; that the King had had the weakness to promise she should be, and that the declaration was about to be made. He put some papers in his hand, and at once went straight to the King, who was in a very private room. Seeing Louvois at an unexpected hour, he asked him what brought him there? "Something pressing and important," replied Louvois, with a sad manner that astonished the King, and induced him to command the valets present to quit the room. They went away in fact, but left the door open, so that they could hear all, and see all too, by the glass. This was the great danger of the cabinets.

The valets being gone, Louvois did not dissimulate from the King his mission. The monarch was often false, but incapable of rising above his own falsehood.

Surprised at being discovered, he tried to shuffle out of the matter, and pressed by his minister, began to move so as to gain the other cabinet where the valets were, and thus deliver himself from his hobble. But Louvois who perceived what he was about, threw himself on his knees and stopped him, drew from his side a little sword he wore, presented the handle to the King, and prayed him to kill him on the spot, if he would persist in declaring his marriage, in breaking his word, and covering himself in the eyes of Europe with infamy. The King stamped, fumed, told Louvois to let him go. But Louvois squeezed him tighter by the legs for fear he should escape; represented to him the shame of what he had decided on doing;—in a word, succeeded so well, that he drew for the second time from the King, a promise that the marriage should never be declared.

Madame de Maintenon meanwhile expected every moment to be proclaimed Queen. At the end of some days, disturbed by the silence of the King, she ventured to touch upon the subject. The embarrassment she caused the King much troubled her. He softened the affair as much as he could, but finished by begging her to think no more of being declared, and never to speak of it to him again! After the first shock that the loss of her hopes caused her, she sought to find out to whom she was beholden for it. She soon learned the truth; and it is not surprising that she swore to obtain Louvois's disgrace, and never ceased to work at it until successful. She waited her opportunity, and undermined her enemy at leisure, availing

herself of every occasion to make him odious to the King.

Time passed. At length it happened that Louvois, not content with the terrible executions in the Palatinate, which he had counselled, wished to burn Trèves. He proposed it to the King. A dispute arose between them, but the King would not or could not be persuaded. It may be imagined that Madame de Maintenon did not do much to convince him.

Some days afterwards Louvois, who had the fault of obstinacy, came as usual to work with the King in Madame de Maintenon's rooms. At the end of the sitting he said, that he felt convinced that it was scrupulousness alone which had hindered the King from consenting to so necessary an act as the burning of Trèves, and that he had, therefore, taken the responsibility on himself by sending a courier with orders to set fire to the place at once.

The King was immediately, and contrary to his nature, so transported with anger that he seized the tongs, and was about to make a run at Louvois, when Madame de Maintenon placed herself between them, crying, "Oh, Sire, what are you going to do?" and took the tongs from his hands.

Louvois, meanwhile, gained the door. The King cried after him to recal him, and said, with flashing eyes: "Despatch a courier instantly with a counter-order, and let him arrive in time; for, know this: if a single house is burned your head shall answer for it." Louvois, more dead than alive, hastened away at once.

Of course, he had sent off no courier. He said he had, believing that by this trick the King, though he might be angry would be led to give way. He had reckoned wrongly, however, as we have seen.

From this time forward Louvois became day by day more distasteful to the King. In the winter of 1690, he proposed that, in order to save expense, the ladies should not accompany the King to the siege of Mons. Madame de Maintenon, we may be sure, did not grow more kindly disposed towards him after this. But as it is always the last drop of water that makes the glass overflow, so a trifle that happened at this siege, completed the disgrace of Louvois.

The King, who plumed himself upon knowing better than anybody the minutest military details, walking one day about the camp, found an ordinary cavalry guard ill-posted, and placed it differently. Later the same day he again visited by chance the spot, and found the guard replaced as at first. He was surprised and shocked. He asked the captains, who had done this, and was told it was Louvois.

"But," replied the King, "did you not tell him 'twas I who had placed you?"

"Yes, Sire," replied the captain. The King piqued, turned towards his suite, and said: "That's Louvois's trade, is it not? He thinks himself a great captain, and that he knows everything," and forthwith he replaced the guard as he had put it in the morning. It was, indeed, foolishness and insolence on the part of Louvois, and the King had spoken truly of him. The King was so wounded that he could not pardon

him. After Louvois's death, he related this incident to Pomponne, still annoyed at it, as I knew by means of the Abbé de Pomponne.

After the return from Mons the dislike of the King for Louvois augmented to such an extent, that this minister, who was so presumptuous, and who thought himself so necessary, began to tremble. The Maréchale de Rochefort having gone with her daughter, Madame de Blansac, to dine with him at Meudon, he took them out for a ride in a little calèche, which he himself drove. They heard him repeatedly say to himself, musing profoundly, "Will he? Will he be made to? No—and yet—no, he will not dare."

During this monologue Louvois was so absorbed that he was within an ace of driving them all into the water, and would have done so, had they not seized the reins, and cried out that he was going to drown them. At their cries and movement, Louvois awoke as from a deep sleep, drew up, and turned, saying that, indeed, he was musing, and not thinking of the vehicle.

I was at Versailles at that time, and happened to call upon Louvois about some business of my father's. The same day I met him after dinner as he was going to work with the King. About four o'clock in the afternoon I learned that he had been taken rather unwell at Madame de Maintenon's, that the King had forced him to go home, that he had done so on foot, that some trifling remedy was administered to him there, and that during the operation of it he died!

The surprise of all the Court may be imagined. Although I was little more than fifteen years of age, I

wished to see the countenance of the King after the occurrence of an event of this kind. I went and waited for him, and followed him during all his promenade. He appeared to me with his accustomed majesty, but had a nimble manner, as though he felt more free than usual. I remarked that, instead of going to see his fountains, and diversifying his walk as usual, he did nothing but walk up and down by the balustrade of the orangery, whence he could see, in returning towards the château, the lodging in which Louvois had just died, and towards which he unceasingly looked.

The name of Louvois was never afterwards pronounced; not a word was said upon this death so surprising, and so sudden, until the arrival of an officer, sent by the King of England from St. Germains, who came to the King upon this terrace, and paid him a compliment of condolence upon the loss he had received.

"Monsieur," replied the King, in a tone and with a manner more than easy, "give my compliments and my thanks to the King and Queen of England, and say to them in my name, that my affairs and theirs will go on none the worse for what has happened."

The officer made a bow and retired, astonishment painted upon his face, and expressed in all his bearing. I anxiously observed all this, and also remarked that all the principal people around the King looked at each other, but said no word. The fact was, as I afterwards learned, that Louvois, when he died, was so deeply in disgrace, that the very next day he was to have been arrested and sent to the Bastille! The

King told Chamillart so, and Chamillart related it to me. This explains, I fancy, the joy of the King at the death of his minister; for it saved him from executing the plan he had resolved on.

The suddenness of the disease and death of Louvois caused much talk, especially when, on the opening of the body, it was discovered that he had been poisoned.* A servant was arrested on the charge; but before the trial took place he was liberated, at the express command of the King, and the whole affair was hushed up. Five or six months afterwards Séron, private physician of Louvois, barricaded himself in his apartment at Versailles, and uttered dreadful cries. People came, but he refused to open; and as the door could not be forced, he went on shrieking all day, without succour, spiritual or temporal, saying at last that he had got what he deserved for what he had done to his master; that he was a wretch unworthy of help; and so he died despairing, in eight or ten hours, without having spoken of any one, or uttered a single name!

* This assertion of St. Simon has been disputed on the authority of a medical writer, who attributes the death of Louvois to natural causes. The circumstances narrated in the text are, however, suspicious.

CHAPTER XX.

Daily occupations of Madame de Maintenon—Her policy—How she governed the King's affairs—Connivance with the Ministers—Anecdote of Le Tellier—Behaviour of the King to Madame de Maintenon—His hardness—selfishness—want of thought for others—Anecdotes—Resignation of the King—Its causes—The Jesuits and the doctors—The King and lay Jesuits.

It must not be imagined that in order to maintain her position Madame de Maintenon had need of no address. Her reign, on the contrary, was only one continual intrigue; and that of the King a perpetual dupery.

Her mornings, which she commenced very early, were occupied with obscure audiences for charitable or spiritual affairs. Pretty often, at eight o'clock in the morning, or earlier, she went to some minister; the ministers of war, above all those of finance, were those with whom she had most business.

Ordinarily as soon as she rose, she went to St. Cyr, dined in her apartment there alone, or with some favourite of the house, gave as few audiences as possible, ruled over the arrangements of the establishment, meddled with the affairs of convents, read and replied to letters, directed the affairs of the house, received information and letters from her spies, and

returned to Versailles just as the King was ready to enter her rooms. When older and more infirm, she would lie down in bed on arriving between seven and eight o'clock in the morning at St. Cyr, or take some remedy.

Towards nine o'clock in the evening two waiting women came to undress her. Immediately afterwards, her maître d'hôtel, or a valet de chambre brought her her supper—soup, or something light. As soon as she had finished her meal, her women put her to bed, and all this in the presence of the King and his minister, who did not cease working or speak lower. This done, ten o'clock had arrived; the curtains of Madame de Maintenon were drawn, and the King went to supper after saying good night to her.

When with the King in her own room, they each occupied an arm-chair, with a table between them, at either side of the fire-place, hers towards the bed, the King's with the back to the wall, where was the door of the ante-chamber; two stools were before the table, one for the minister who came to work, the other for his papers.

During the work Madame de Maintenon read or worked at tapestry. She heard all that passed between the King and his minister, for they spoke out loud. Rarely did she say anything, or, if so, it was of no moment. The King often asked her opinion; then she replied with great discretion. Never did she appear to lay stress on anything, still less to interest herself for anybody, but she had an understanding with the minister, who did not dare to oppose her in

private, still less to trip in her presence. When some favour or some post was to be granted, the matter was arranged between them beforehand; and this it was that sometimes delayed her, without the King or anybody knowing the cause.

She would send word to the minister that she wished to speak to him. He did not dare to bring anything forward until he had received her orders; until the revolving mechanism of each day had given them the leisure to confer together. That done, the minister proposed and showed a list. If by chance the King stopped at the name Madame de Maintenon wished, the minister stopped too, and went no further. If the King stopped at some other, the minister proposed that he should look at those which were also fitting, allowed the King leisure to make his observations, and profited by them, to exclude the people who were not wanted. Rarely did he propose expressly the name to which he wished to come, but always suggested several that he tried to balance against each other, so as to embarrass the King in his choice. Then the King asked his opinion, and the minister, after touching upon other names, fixed upon the one he had selected.

The King nearly always hesitated, and asked Madame de Maintenon what she thought. She smiled, shammed incapacity, said a word upon some other name, then returned, if she had not fixed herself there at first, to that which the minister had proposed; so that three-fourths of the favours and opportunities which passed through the hands of the ministers in her rooms—and three-fourths even of the remaining fourth—were

disposed of by her. Sometimes when she had nobody for whom she cared, it was the minister, with her consent and her help, who decided, without the King having the least suspicion. He thought he disposed of everything by himself; whilst, in fact, he disposed only of the smallest part, and always then by chance, except on the rare occasions when he specially wished to favour some one.

As for state matters, if Madame de Maintenon wished to make them succeed, fail, or turn in some particular fashion (which happened much less often than where favours and appointments were in the wind), the same intelligence and the same intrigue were carried on between herself and the minister. By these particulars it will be seen that this clever woman did nearly all she wished, but not when or how she wished.

There was another scheme if the King stood out; it was to avoid decision by confusing and spinning out the matter in hand, or by substituting another as though arising opportunely out of it, and by which it was turned aside, or by proposing that some explanations should be obtained. The first ideas of the King were thus weakened, and the charge was afterwards returned to, with the same address, oftentimes with success.

It is this which made the ministers so necessary to Madame de Maintenon, and her so necessary to them. She rendered them, in fact, continual services by means of the King, in return for the services they rendered her. The mutual concerns, therefore, between her and them were infinite; the King, all the while, not having the slightest suspicion of what was going on!

The power of Madame de Maintenon was, as may be imagined, immense. She had everybody in her hands, from the highest and most favoured minister to the meanest subject of the realm. Many people have been ruined by her, without having been able to discover the author of their ruin, search as they might. All attempts to find a remedy were equally unsuccessful.

Yet the King was constantly on his guard, not only against Madame de Maintenon, but against his ministers also. Many a time it happened that when sufficient care had not been taken, and he perceived that a minister or a general wished to favour a relative or protegé of Madame de Maintenon, he firmly opposed the appointment on that account alone, and the remarks he uttered thereupon made Madame de Maintenon very timid and very measured when she wished openly to ask a favour.

Le Tellier, long before he was made Chancellor, well knew the mood of the King. One of his friends asked him for some place that he much desired. Le Tellier replied that he would do what he could. The friend did not like this reply, and frankly said it was not such as he expected from a man with such authority. "You do not know the ground," replied Le Tellier; "of twenty matters that we bring before the King, we are sure he will pass nineteen according to our wishes; we are equally certain that the twentieth will be decided against them. But which of the twenty will be decided contrary to our desire we never know, although it may be the one we have most at

heart. The King reserves to himself this caprice, to make us feel that he is the master, and that he governs; and if, by chance, something is presented upon which he is obstinate, and which is sufficiently important for us to be obstinate about also, either on account of the thing itself, or for the desire we have that it should succeed as we wish, we very often get a dressing; but, in truth, the dressing over, and the affair fallen through, the King content with having showed that we can do nothing, and pained by having vexed us, becomes afterwards supple and flexible, so that then is the time at which we can do all we wish."

This is, in truth, how the King conducted himself with his ministers, always completely governed by them, even by the youngest and most mediocre, even by the least accredited and the least respected—yet always on his guard against being governed, and always persuaded that he succeeded fully in avoiding it.

He adopted the same conduct towards Madame de Maintenon, whom at times he scolded terribly, and applauded himself for so doing. Sometimes she threw herself on her knees before him, and for several days was really upon thorns. When she had appointed Fagon physician of the King in place of Daquin, whom she dismissed, she had a doctor upon whom she could certainly rely, and she played the sick woman accordingly, after those scenes with the King, and in this manner turned them to her own advantage.

It was not that this artifice had any power in con-

straining the King, or that a real illness would have had any. He was a man solely personal, and who counted others only as they stood in relation to himself. His hard-heartedness, therefore, was extreme. At the time when he was most inclined towards his mistresses, whatever indisposition they might labour under, even the most opposed to travelling and to appearing in full court dress, could not save them from either. When enceinte, or ill, or just risen from childbirth, they must needs be squeezed into full dress, go to Flanders or further, dance, sit up, attend fêtes, eat, be merry and good company; go from place to place; appear neither to fear, nor to be inconvenienced by heat, cold, wind, or dust; and all this precisely to the hour and day, without a minute's grace.

His daughters he treated in the same manner. It has been seen, in its place, that he had no more consideration for Madame la Duchesse de Berry, nor even for Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne—whatever Fagon, Madame de Maintenon, and others might do or say. Yet he loved Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne as tenderly as he was capable of loving anybody: but both she and Madame la Duchesse de Berry had miscarriages, which relieved him, he said, though they then had no children.

When he travelled his coach was always full of women; his mistresses, afterwards his bastards, his daughters-in-law, sometimes Madame, and other ladies when there was room. In the coach, during his journeys, there were always all sorts of things to eat, as meat, pastry, fruit. A quarter of a league was not

passed over before the King asked if somebody would not eat. He never ate anything between meals himself, not even fruit; but he amused himself by seeing others do so, aye, and to bursting. You were obliged to be hungry, merry, and to eat with appetite, otherwise he was displeased and even showed it. And yet after this, if you supped with him at table the same day, you were compelled to eat with as good a countenance as though you had tasted nothing since the previous night. He was as inconsiderate in other and more delicate matters; and ladies, in his long drives and stations, had often occasion to curse him. The Duchesse de Chevreuse once rode all the way from Versailles to Fontainebleau in such extremity, that several times she was well-nigh losing consciousness.

The King, who was fond of air, liked all the windows to be lowered; he would have been much displeased had any lady drawn a curtain for protection against sun, wind, or cold. No inconvenience or incommodity was allowed to be even perceived; and the King always went very quickly, most frequently with relays. To faint was a fault past hope of pardon.

Madame de Maintenon, who feared the air and many other inconveniences, could gain no privilege over the others. All she obtained, under pretence of modesty and other reasons, was permission to journey apart; but whatever condition she might be in, she was obliged to follow the King, and be ready to receive him in her rooms by the time he was ready to enter

them. She made many journeys to Marly in a state such as would have saved a servant from movement. She made one to Fontainebleau when it seemed not unlikely that she would die on the road! In whatever condition she might be, the King went to her at his ordinary hour and did what he had projected; though several times she was in bed, profusely sweating away a fever. The King, who as I have said, was fond of air and feared warm rooms, was astonished upon arriving to find everything close shut, and ordered the windows to be opened; would not spare them an inch; and up to ten o'clock, when he went to supper, kept them open, utterly regardless of the cool night air, although he knew well what a state she was in. If there was to be music, fever or head-ache availed not; a hundred wax candles flashed all the same in her eyes. The King, in fact, always followed his own inclination, without ever asking whether she was inconvenienced.

The tranquillity and pious resignation of the King during the last days of his illness, was a matter of some surprise to many people, as, indeed, it deserved to be. By way of explanation, the doctors said that the malady he died of, while it deadens and destroys all bodily pain, calms and annihilates all heart pangs and agitation of the mind.

They who were in the sick chamber, during the last days of his illness, gave another reason.

The Jesuits constantly admit the laity, even married, into their company. This fact is certain. There is no doubt that Des Noyers, Secretary of State under

Louis XIII., was of this number, or that many others have been so too. These licentiates make the same vow as the Jesuits, as far as their condition admits: that is, unrestricted obedience to the General, and to the superiors of the company. They are obliged to supply the place of the vows of poverty and chastity, by promising to give all the service and all the protection in their power to the Company, above all, to be entirely submissive to the superiors and to their confessor. They are obliged to perform with exactitude, such light exercises of piety as their confessor may think adapted to the circumstances of their lives, and that he simplifies as much as he likes. It answers the purpose of the Company, to ensure to itself those hidden auxiliaries whom it lets off cheaply. But nothing must pass through their minds, nothing must come to their knowledge, that they do not reveal to their confessor; and that which is not a secret of the conscience, to the superiors, if the confessor thinks fit. In everything, too, they must obey, without comment, the superior and the confessors.

It has been pretended that Père Tellier had inspired the King, long before his death, with the desire to be admitted, on this footing, into the Company; that he had vaunted to him the privileges and plenary indulgences attached to it; that he had persuaded him that whatever crimes had been committed, and whatever difficulty there might be in making amends for them, this secret profession washed out all, and infallibly assured salvation, provided that the vows were faithfully kept; that the General of the Company was

admitted into the secret with the consent of the King; that the King pronounced the vows before Père Tellier; that in the last days of his life they were heard, the one fortifying, the other reposing upon these promises; that, at last, the King received from Père Tellier, the final benediction of the Company, as one of its members; that Père Tellier made the King offer up prayers, partly heard, of a kind to leave no doubt of the matter; and that he had given him the robe, or the almost imperceptible sign, as it were, a sort of scapulary, which was found upon him. To conclude, the majority of those who approached the King in his last moments, attributed his penitence to the artifices and persuasions of the Jesuits, who, for temporal interests, deceive sinners even up to the edge of the tomb, and conduct them to it in profound peace by a path strewn with flowers.

However it is but fair to say, that Maréchal, who was very trustful, assured me he had never perceived anything which justified this idea, and that he was persuaded there was not the least truth in it; and I think, that although he was not always in the chamber or near the bed, and although Père Tellier might mistrust and try to deceive him, still if the King had been made a Jesuit as stated, Maréchal must have had some knowledge or some suspicion of the circumstance.

CHAPTER XXI.

External life of Louis XIV.—At the Army—Etiquette of the King's table—Court manners and customs—The rising of the King—Morning occupations—Secret amours—Going to mass—Councils—Thursdays—Fridays—Ceremony of the King's dinner—The King's brother—After dinner—The Drive—Walks at Marly and elsewhere—Stag-Hunting—Play-tables—Lotteries—Visits to Madame de Maintenon—Supper—The King retires to rest—Medicine days—King's religious observances—Fervency in Lent—At Mass—Costume—Politeness of the King for the Court of St. Germains—Feelings of the Court at his death—Relief of Madame de Maintenon—Of the Duchess d'Orleans—Of the Court Generally—Joy of Paris and the whole of France—Decency of foreigners—Burial of the King.

After having thus described with truth and the most exact fidelity, all that has come to my knowledge through my own experience, or others qualified to speak of Louis XIV. during the last twenty-two years of his life; and after having shown him such as he was, without prejudice (although I have permitted myself to use the arguments naturally resulting from things), nothing remains but to describe the outside life of this monarch, during my residence at the Court.

However insipid and perhaps superfluous details so well known may appear after what has been already given,—lessons will be found therein for kings who may wish to make themselves respected, and who may wish to respect themselves. What determines me still more is, that details wearying, nay annoying, to in-

structed readers, who have been witnesses of what I relate, soon escape the knowledge of posterity; and that experience shows us how much we regret that no one takes upon himself a labour, in his own time so ungrateful, but in future years so interesting, and by which princes, who have made quite as much stir as the one in question, are characterised. Although it may be difficult to steer clear of repetitions, I will do my best to avoid them.

I will not speak much of the King's manner of living when with the army. His hours were determined by what was to be done, though he held his councils regularly; I will simply say, that morning and evening he ate with people privileged to have that honour. When anyone wished to claim it, the first gentleman of the chamber on duty was appealed to. He gave the answer, and if favourable you presented yourself the next day to the King, who said to you, "Monsieur, seat yourself at table." That being done, all was done. Ever afterwards you were at liberty to take a place at the King's table, but with discretion. The number of the persons from whom a choice was made was, however, very limited. Even very high military rank did not suffice. M. de Vauban, at the siege of Namur, was overwhelmed by the distinction. The King did the same honour at Namur to the Abbé de Grancey, who exposed himself everywhere to confess the wounded and encourage the troops. No other Abbé was ever so distinguished. All the clergy were excluded save the cardinals, and the bishops, peers, or the ecclesiastics who held the rank of foreign princes.

At these repasts everybody was covered; it would have been a want of respect, of which you would have been immediately informed, if you had not kept your hat on your head. The King alone was uncovered. When the King wished to speak to you, or you had occasion to speak to him, you uncovered. You uncovered, also, when Monseigneur or Monsieur spoke to you, or you to them. For princes of the blood you merely put your hand to your hat. The King alone had an arm chair. All the rest of the company, Monseigneur included, had seats, with backs, of black morocco leather, which could be folded up to be carried, and which were called "parrots." Except at the army, the King never ate with any man, under whatever circumstances; not even with the princes of the blood, save sometimes at their wedding feasts.

Let us return now to the Court.

At eight o'clock, the chief valet de chambre on duty, who alone had slept in the royal chamber, and who had dressed himself, awoke the King. The chief physician, the chief surgeon, and the nurse (as long as she lived), entered at the same time. The latter kissed the King; the others rubbed and often changed his shirt, because he was in the habit of sweating a great deal. At the quarter, the grand chamberlain was called (or, in his absence, the first gentleman of the chamber), and those who had, what was called, the *grandes entrées*. The chamberlain (or chief gentleman) drew back the curtains which had been closed again, and presented the holy water from the vase, at the head of the bed. These gentlemen stayed but a

moment, and that was the time to speak to the King, if anyone had anything to ask of him; in which case the rest stood aside. When, contrary to custom, nobody had aught to say, they were there but for a few moments. He who had opened the curtains and presented the holy water, presented also a prayer-book. Then all passed into the cabinet of the council. A very short religious service being over, the King called; they re-entered. The same officer gave him his dressing-gown; immediately after, other privileged courtiers entered, and then everybody, in time to find the King putting on his shoes and stockings, for he did almost everything himself and with address and grace. Every other day we saw him shave himself; and he had a little short wig in which he always appeared, even in bed, and on medicine days. He often spoke of the chase, and sometimes said a word to somebody. No toilette table was near him; he had simply a mirror held before him.

As soon as he was dressed, he prayed to God, at the side of his bed, where all the clergy present knelt, the cardinals without cushions, all the laity remaining standing; and the captain of the guards came to the balustrade during the prayer, after which the King passed into his cabinet.

He found there, or was followed by all who had the entré, a very numerous company, for it included everybody in any office. He gave orders to each for the day; thus within a half a quarter of an hour it was known what he meant to do; and then all this crowd left directly. The bastards, a few favourites,

and the valets alone were left. It was then a good opportunity for talking with the King; for example, about plans of gardens and buildings; and conversation lasted more or less according to the person engaged in it.

All the court meantime waited for the King in the gallery, the captain of the guard being alone in the chamber seated at the door of the cabinet. At morning the court waited in the saloon; at Trianon in the front rooms as at Meudon; at Fontainebleau in the chamber and anti-chamber. During this pause the King gave audiences when he wished to accord any, spoke with whoever he might wish to speak secretly to, and gave secret interviews to foreign ministers in presence of Torcy. They were called "secret," simply to distinguish them from the uncommon ones by the bedsides.

The King went to mass, where his musicians always sang an anthem. He did not go below except on grand fêtes or at ceremonies. Whilst he was going to and returning from mass, everybody spoke to him who wished, after apprising the captain of the guard, if they were not distinguished; and he came and went by the door of the cabinets into the gallery. During the mass the ministers assembled in the King's chamber where distinguished people could go and speak or chat with them. The King amused himself a little upon returning from mass and asked almost immediately for the council. Then the morning was finished.

On Sunday, and often on Monday, there was a coun-

cil of state; on Tuesday a finance council; on Wednesday council of state; on Saturday finance council. Rarely were two held in one day or any on Thursday or Friday. Once or twice a month there was a council of despatches on Monday morning; but the order that the Secretaries of State took every morning between the King's rising and his mass, much abridged this kind of business. All the ministers were seated according to rank except at the council of despatches, where all stood except the sons of France, the Chancellor, and the Duc de Beauvilliers.

Thursday morning was almost always blank. It was the day for audiences that the King wished to give —often unknown to any—back stair audiences. It was also the grand day taken advantage of by the bastards, the valets, &c., because the King had nothing to do. On Friday after the mass the King was with his confessor, and the length of their audiences was limited by nothing, and might last until dinner. At Fontainebleau on the mornings when there was no council, the King usually passed from mass to Madame de Maintenon's and so at Trianon and Marly. It was the time of their tête-a-tête without interruption. Often on the days when there was no council the dinner hour was advanced, more or less for the chase or the promenade. The ordinary hour was one o'clock; if the council still lasted, then the dinner waited and nothing was said to the King.

The dinner was always *au petit couvert*, that is, the King ate by himself in his chamber upon a square table in front of the middle window. It was more or

less abundant, for he ordered in the morning whether it was to be "a little," or "very little" service. But even at this last, there were always many dishes, and three courses without counting the fruit. The dinner being ready, the principal courtiers entered; then all who were known; and the first gentleman of the chamber on duty, informed the King.

I have seen, but very rarely, Monseigneur and his sons standing at their dinners, the King not offering them a seat. I have continually seen there the Princes of the blood and the cardinals. I have often seen there also Monsieur, either on arriving from St. Cloud to see the King, or arriving from the council of despatches (the only one he entered), give the King his napkin and remain standing. A little while afterwards the King seeing that he did not go away, asked him if he would not sit down; he bowed, and the King ordered a seat to be brought for him. A stool was put behind him. Some moments after the King said, "Nay then, sit down my brother:" Monsieur bowed and seated himself until the end of the dinner, when he presented the napkin.

At other times when he came from St. Cloud, the King on arriving at the table asked for a plate for Monsieur, or asked him if he would dine. If he refused, he went away a moment after and there was no mention of a seat; if he accepted, the King asked for a plate for him. The table was square, he placed himself at one end, his back to the cabinet. Then the Grand Chamberlain (or the first gentleman of the chamber) gave him drink and plates, taking them from

him as he finished with them, exactly as he served the King; but Monsieur received all this attention with strongly marked politeness. When he dined thus with the King he much enlivened the conversation. The King ordinarily spoke little at table unless some familiar favourite was near. It was the same at his rising. Ladies scarcely ever were seen at these little dinners.

I have, however, seen the Maréchale de la Mothe, who came in because she had been used to do so as governness to the children of France, and who received a seat, because she was a Duchess. Grand dinners were very rare, and only took place on grand occasions, and then ladies were present.

Upon leaving the table the King immediately entered his cabinet. That was the time for distinguished people to speak to him. He stopped at the door a moment to listen, then entered; very rarely did any one follow him, never without asking him for permission to do so; and for this few had the courage. If followed he placed himself in the embrasure of the window nearest to the door of the cabinet, which immediately closed of itself, and which you were obliged to open yourself on quitting the King. This also was the time for the bastards and the valets.

The King amused himself by feeding his dogs and remained with them more or less time, then asked for his wardrobe, changed before the very few distinguished people it pleased the first gentleman of the chamber to admit there, and immediately went out by the back-stairs into the court of marble to get into his coach.

From the bottom of that staircase to the coach, any one spoke to him who wished.

The King was fond of air, and when deprived of it his health suffered; he had headaches and vapours caused by the undue use he had formerly made of perfumes, so that for many years he could not endure any, except the odour of orange flowers; therefore if you had to approach anywhere near him you did well not to carry them.

As he was but little sensitive to heat or cold, or even to rain, the weather was seldom sufficiently bad to prevent his going abroad. He went out for three objects: stag-hunting, once or more each week; shooting in his parks (and no man handled a gun with more grace or skill), once or twice each week; and walking in his gardens for exercise, and to see his workmen. Sometimes he made picnics with ladies, in the forest at Marly or at Fontainebleau, and in this last place, promenades with all the Court around the canal, which was a magnificent spectacle. Nobody followed him in his other promenades but those who held principal offices, except at Versailles or in the gardens of Trianon. Marly had a privilege unknown to the other places. On going out from the château, the King said aloud, "Your hats, gentlemen," and immediately courtiers, officers of the guard, every body, in fact, covered their heads, as he would have been much displeased had they not done so; and this lasted all the promenade, that is four or five hours in summer, or in other seasons, when he dined early at Versailles to go and walk at Marly, and not sleep there.

The stag-hunting parties were on an extensive scale. At Fontainebleau every one went who wished; elsewhere only those were allowed to go who had obtained the permission once for all, and those who had obtained leave to wear the *justaucorps,* which was a blue uniform with silver and gold lace, lined with red. The King did not like too many people at these parties. He did not care for you to go if you were not fond of the chase. He thought that ridiculous, and never bore ill-will to those who stopped away altogether.

It was the same with the play-table, which he liked to see always well frequented—with high stakes—in the saloon at Marly, for lansquenet and other games. He amused himself at Fontainebleau during bad weather by seeing good players at tennis, in which he had formerly excelled; and at Marly by seeing mall played, in which he had also been skilful. Sometimes when there was no council, he would make presents of stuff, or of silver ware, or jewels, to the ladies, by means of a lottery, for the tickets of which they paid nothing. Madame de Maintenon drew lots with the others, and almost always gave at once what she gained. The King took no ticket.

Upon returning home from walks or drives, any body, as I have said, might speak to the King from the moment he left his coach till he reached the foot of his staircase. He changed his dress again, and rested in his cabinet an hour or more, then went to Madame de Maintenon's, and on the way any one who wished might speak to him.

At ten o'clock his supper was served. The captain

of the guard announced this to him. A quarter of an hour after the King came to supper, and from the ante-chamber of Madame de Maintenon to the table again, any one spoke to him who wished. This supper was always on a grand scale, the royal household (that is, the sons and daughters of France), at table, and a large number of courtiers and ladies present, sitting or standing, and on the evening before the journey to Marly all those ladies who wished to take part in it. That was called presenting yourself for Marly. Men asked in the morning, simply saying to the King, "Sire, Marly." In later years the King grew tired of this, and a valet wrote up in the gallery the names of those who asked. The ladies continued to present themselves.

After supper the King stood some moments, his back to the balustrade of the foot of his bed, encircled by all his Court; then, with bows to the ladies, passed into his cabinet, where on arriving, he gave his orders. He passed a little less than an hour there, seated in an arm chair, with his legitimate children and bastards, his grand-children, legitimate and otherwise, and their husbands or wives. Monsieur in another arm-chair; the princesses upon stools, Monseigneur and all the other princes standing.

The King, wishing to retire, went and fed his dogs; then said good night, passed into his chamber to the *ruelle* of his bed, where he said his prayers, as in the morning, then undressed. He said good night with an inclination of the head, and whilst everybody was leaving the room stood at the corner of the mantel-

piece, where he gave the order to the colonel of the guards alone. Then commenced what was called the *petit coucher*, at which only the specially privileged remained. That was short. They did not leave until he got into bed. It was a moment to speak to him. Then all left if they saw any one buckle to the King. For ten or twelve years before he died, the *petit coucher* ceased, in consequence of a long attack of gout he had had; so that the Court was finished at the rising from supper.

On medicine days, which occurred about once a month, the King remained in bed, then heard mass. The royal household came to see him for a moment, and Madame de Maintenon seated herself in the arm-chair at the head of his bed. The King dined in bed about three o'clock, every body being allowed to enter the room, then rose, and the privileged alone remained. He passed afterwards into his cabinet, where he held a council, and afterwards went, as usual, to Madame de Maintenon's, and supped at ten o'clock, according to custom.

During all his life, the King failed only once in his attendance at mass. It was with the army, during a forced march; he missed no fast day, unless really indisposed. Some days before Lent, he publicly declared that he should be very much displeased if any one ate meat or gave it to others, under any pretext. He ordered the grand prevôt to look to this, and report all cases of disobedience. But no one dared to disobey his commands, for they would soon have found out the cost. They extended even to Paris, where

the lieutenant of police kept watch and reported. For twelve or fifteen years he had himself not observed Lent, however. At church he was very respectful. During his mass everybody was obliged to kneel at the *Sanctus*, and to remain so until after the communion of the priest; and if he heard the least noise, or saw any body talking during the mass, he was much displeased. He took the communion five times a year, in the collar of the Order, band, and cloak. On Holy Thursday, he served the poor at dinner; at the mass he said his chaplet (he knew no more), always kneeling, except at the Gospel.

He was always clad in dresses more or less brown, lightly embroidered, but never at the edges, sometimes with nothing but a gold button, sometimes black velvet. He wore always a vest of cloth, or of red, blue, or green satin, much embroidered. He used no ring; and no jewels, except in the buckles of his shoes, garters, and hat, the latter always trimmed with Spanish point, with a white feather. He had always the *cordon bleu* outside, except on fêtes, when he wore it inside, with eight or ten millions of precious stones attached.

Rarely a fortnight passed that the King did not go to Saint Germains, even after the death of King James the Second. The Court of Saint Germains came also to Versailles, but oftener to Marly, and frequently to sup there; and no fête or ceremony took place to which they were not 'invited, and at which they were not received with all honours. Nothing could compare with the politeness of the King for this Court, or

with the air of gallantry and of majesty with which he received it at any time. Birth days, or the féte days of the King and his family, so observed in the courts of Europe, were always unknown in that of the King; so that there never was the slightest mention of them, or any difference made on their account.

The King was but little regretted. His valets and a few other people felt his loss, scarcely anybody else. His successor was not yet old enough to feel anything. Madame entertained for him only fear and considerate respect. Madame la Duchesse de Berry did not like him, and counted now upon reigning undisturbed. M. le Duc d'Orleans could scarcely be expected to feel much grief for him. And those who may have been expected did not consider it necessary to do their duty. Madame de Maintenon was wearied with him ever since the death of the Dauphine; she knew not what to do, or with what to amuse him; her constraint was tripled because he was much more with her than before. She had often, too, experienced much ill-humour from him. She had attained all she wished, so that whatever she might lose in losing him, she felt herself relieved, and was capable of no other sentiment at first. The ennui and emptiness of her life afterwards made her feel regret. As for M. du Maine, the barbarous indecency of his joy need not be dwelt upon. The icy tranquillity of his brother, the Comte de Toulouse, neither increased nor diminished. Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans, surprised me. I had expected some grief, I perceived only a few tears, which upon all occasions flowed very readily

from her eyes, and which were soon dried up. Her bed, which she was very fond of, supplied what was wanting during several days, amidst obscurity which she by no means disliked. But the window curtains were soon withdrawn and grief disappeared.

As for the court it was divided into two grand parties, the men hoping to figure, to obtain employ, to introduce themselves: and they were ravished to see the end of a reign under which they had nothing to hope for; the others, fatigued with a heavy yoke, always overwhelming, and of the ministers much more than of the King, were charmed to find themselves at liberty, Thus all, generally speaking, were glad to be delivered from continual restraint, and were eager for change.

Paris, tired of a dependence which had enslaved everything, breathed again in the hope of liberty, and with joy at seeing at an end the authority of so many people who abused it. The provinces in despair at their ruin and their annihilation breathed again and leaped for joy; and the parliament and the robe destroyed by edicts and by revolutions, flattered themselves the first that they should figure, the other that they should find themselves free. The people ruined, overwhelmed, desperate, gave thanks to God, with a scandalous éclat, for a deliverance, their most ardent desires had not anticipated.*

Foreigners delighted to be at last, after so many years, quit of a monarch who had so long imposed

* Such was the termination of a reign, of which Frenchmen ever since have tried to persuade themselves they have reason to be proud.

his law upon them, and who had escaped from them by a species of miracle at the very moment in which they counted upon having subjugated him, contained themselves with much more decency than the French. The marvels of the first three quarters of this reign of more than seventy years, and the personal magnanimity of this King, until then so successful, and so abandoned afterwards by fortune during the last quarter of his reign—had justly dazzled them. They made it a point of honour to render to him after his death what they had constantly refused him during life. No foreign Court exulted: all plumed themselves upon praising and honouring his memory. The Emperor wore mourning as for a father, and although four or five months elapsed between the death of the King and the Carnival, all kinds of amusements were prohibited at Vienna during the Carnival, and the prohibition was strictly observed. A monstrous fact was, that towards the end of this period there was a single ball and a kind of fête that the Comte du Luc, our own ambassador, was not ashamed to give to the ladies, who seduced him by the ennui of so dull a Carnival. This complaisance did not raise him in estimation at Vienna or elsewhere. In France people were contented with ignoring it.

As for our ministry and the intendants of the Provinces, the financiers and what may be called the *canaille*, they felt all the extent of their loss. We shall see if the realm was right or wrong in the sentiments it held, and whether it found soon after that it had gained or lost.

To finish at once all that regards the King, let me here say, that his entrails were taken to Notre Dame, on the 4th of September, without any ceremony, by two almoners of the King, without accompaniment. On Friday the 6th of September, the Cardinal de Rohan, carried the heart to the Grand Jesuits, with very little accompaniment or pomp. Except the persons necessary for the ceremony, not half a dozen Courtiers were present. It is not for me to comment upon this prompt ingratitude, I, who for fifty-two years, have never once missed going to St. Denis on the anniversary of the death of Louis XIII., and have never seen a single person there on the same errand. On the 9th of September, the body of the late King was buried at St. Denis. The Bishop of Aleth pronounced the oration. Very little expense was gone to; and nobody was found who cared sufficiently for the late King to murmur at the economy. On Friday the 25th of October, his solemn obsequies took place at St. Denis in a confusion, as to rank and precedence, without example. On Thursday, the 28th of November, the solemn obsequies were again performed, this time at Notre Dame, and with the usual ceremonies.

CHAPTER XXII.

Surprise of M. d'Orleans at the King's death—My interview with him—Dispute about hats—M. de Maine at the Parliament—His reception—My protest—The King's will—Its contents and reception—Speech of the Duc d'Orleans—Its effect—His speech on the codicil—Violent discussion—Curious scene—Interruption for dinner—Return to the Parliament—Abrogation of the codicil—New scheme of government—The Regent visits Madame de Maintenon—The establishment of St. Cyr—The Regent's liberality to Madame de Maintenon.

The death of the King surprised M. le Duc d'Orleans in the midst of his idleness as though it had not been foreseen. He had made no progress in numberless arrangements, which I had suggested he should carry out; accordingly he was overwhelmned with orders to give, with things to settle, each more petty than the other, but all so provisional and so urgent that it happened as I had predicted, he had no time to think of anything important.

I learnt the death of the King upon awaking. Immediately after, I went to pay my respects to the new monarch. The first flood had already passed. I found myself almost alone. I went thence to M. le Duc d'Orleans, whom I found shut in, but all his apartments so full that a pin could not have fallen to the ground. I talked of the Convocation of the States-General, and reminded him of a promise he had given me, that he would allow the Dukes to keep their hats

on when their votes were asked for;* and I also mentioned various other promises he had made. All I could obtain from him was another promise, that when the public affairs of pressing moment awaiting attention were disposed of, we should have all we required. Several of the Dukes, who had been witnesses of the engagement M. le Duc d'Orleans had made, were much vexed at this; but ultimately it was agreed, that for the moment we would sacrifice our own particular interests to those of the State.

Between five and six the next morning a number of us met at the house of the Archbishop of Rheims, at the end of the Pont Royal, behind the Hôtel de Mailly, and there in accordance with a resolution previously agreed upon, it was arranged that I should make a protest to the Parliament before the opening of the King's will there, against certain other usurpations, and state that it was solely because M. le Duc d'Orleans had given us his word that our complaints should be attended to as soon as the public affairs of the government were settled, that we postponed further measures upon this subject. It was past seven before our debate ended, and then we went straight to the Parliament.

We found it already assembled, and a few Ducs who had not attended our meeting but had promised to be guided by us, were also present; and then a quarter of an hour after we were seated the bastards arrived.

* This revelation gives the measure of St. Simon's political calibre. The first things that comes into his head, and about which he begins to busy himself at so important a crisis, in a dispute about the right of his Order to wear, or not to wear, hats on a particular occasion.

M. du Maine was bursting with joy; the term is strange, but his bearing cannot otherwise be described. The smiling and satisfied air prevailed over that of audacity and of confidence, which shone, nevertheless, and over politeness which seemed to struggle with them. He saluted right and left, and pierced everybody with his looks. His salutation to the presidents had an air of rejoicing. To the peers he was serious, nay, respectful; the slowness, the lowness of his inclination, was eloquent. His head remained lowered even when he rose, so heavy is the weight of crime, even at the moment when nothing but triumph is expected. I rigidly followed him everywhere with my eyes, and I remarked that his salutes was returned by the peers in a very dry and cold manner.

Scarcely were we re-seated than M. le Duc arrived, and the instant after M. le Duc d'Orleans. I allowed the stir that accompanied his appearance to subside a little, and then seeing that the chief president was about to speak, I forestalled him, uncovered my head, and then covered it, and made my speech in the terms agreed upon. I concluded by appealing to M. le Duc d'Orleans to verify the truth of what I had said, in so far as it affected him.

The profound silence with which I was listened to showed the surprise of all present. M. le Duc d'Orleans uncovered himself, and in a low tone, and with an embarrassed manner, confirmed what I had said, then covered himself again.

Immediately afterwards I looked at M. du Maine, who appeared to be well content at being let off so

easily, and who, my neighbours said to me, appeared much troubled at my commencement.

A very short silence followed my protest, after which I saw the chief president say something in a low tone to M. le Duc d'Orleans, then arrange a deputation of the parliament to go in search of the King's will, and its codicil, which had been put in the same place. Silence continued during this great and short period of expectation; everyone looked at his neighbour without stirring. We were all upon the lower seats, the doors were supposed to be closed, but the grand chamber was filled with a large and inquisitive crowd. The regiment of guards had secretly occupied all the avenues, commanded by the Duc de Guiche, who got six hundred thousand francs out of the Duc d'Orleans for this service, which was quite unnecessary.

The deputation was not long in returning. It placed the will and the codicil in the hands of the chief president who presented them, without parting with them, to M. le Duc d'Orleans, then passed them from hand to hand to Dreux, conseiller of the parliament, and father of the grand master of the ceremonies, saying that he read well, and in a loud voice that would be well heard by everybody. It may be imagined with what silence he was listened to, and how all eyes and ears were turned towards him. Through all his joy the Duc de Maine showed that his soul was troubled, as though about to undergo an operation that he must submit to. M. le Duc d'Orleans showed only a tranquil attention.

I will not dwell upon these two documents, in which

nothing is provided but the grandeur and the power of the bastards, Madame de Maintenon and Saint Cyr, the choice of the King's education and of the council of the regency, by which M. le Duc d'Orleans was to be shorn of all authority to the advantage of M. le Duc du Maine.

I remarked a sadness and a kind of indignation which were painted upon all cheeks, as the reading advanced, and which turned into a sort of tranquil fermentation at the reading of the codicil, which was entrusted to the Abbé Menguy, another conseiller. The Duc du Maine felt it and grew pale, for he was solely occupied in looking at every face, and I in following his looks, and in glancing occasionally at M. le Duc d'Orleans.

The reading being finished that prince spoke, casting his eyes upon all the assembly, uncovering himself, and then covering himself again, and commencing by a word of praise and of regret for the late King; afterwards raising his voice, he declared that he had only to approve everything just read respecting the education of the King, and everything respecting an establishment so fine and so useful as that of St. Cyr; that with respect to the dispositions concerning the government of the state, he would speak separately of those in the will and those in the codicil; that he could with difficulty harmonise them with the assurances the King, during the last days of his life, had given him; that the King could not have understood the importance of what he had been made to do for the Duc du Maine since the Council of the Regency was chosen, and M. du

Maine's authority so established by the will, that the Regent remained almost without power; that this injury done to the rights of his birth, to his attachment to the person of the King, to his love and fidelity for the state, could not be endured if he was to preserve his honour; and that he hoped sufficiently from the esteem of all present, to persuade himself that his regency would be declared as it ought to be, that is to say, complete, independent, and that he should be allowed to chose his own council, with the members of which he would not discuss public affairs, unless they were persons who being approved by the public might also have his confidence. This short speech appeared to make a great impression.

The Duc du Maine wished to speak. As he was about to do so, M. le Duc d'Orleans put his head in front of M. le Duc and said, in a dry tone, "Monsieur, you will speak in your turn." In one moment the affair turned according to the desires of M. le Duc d'Orleans. The power of the council of the regency and its composition fell. The choice of the council was awarded to M. le Duc d'Orleans, with all the authority of the regency, and to the plurality of the votes of the council, the decision of affairs, the vote of the Regent to be counted as two in the event of an equal division. Thus all favours and all punishments remained in the hands of M. le Duc d'Orleans alone. The acclamation was such that the Duc du Maine did not dare to say a word. He reserved himself for the codicil, which if adopted, would have annulled all that M. le Duc d'Orleans had just obtained.

After some few moments of silence M. le Duc d'Orleans spoke again. He testified fresh surprise that the dispositions of the will had not been sufficient for those who had suggested them, and that not content with having established themselves as masters of the state, they themselves should have thought those dispositions so strange that in order to re-assure them, it had been thought necessary to make them masters of the person of the King, of the Regent, of the Court, and of Paris. He added, that if his honour and all law and rule had been wounded by the dispositions of the will, still more violated were they by those of the codicil, which left neither his life nor his liberty in safety, and placed the person of the King in the absolute dependence of those who had dared to profit by the feeble state of a dying monarch, to draw from him conditions he did not understand. He concluded by declaring that the Regency was impossible under such conditions, and that he doubted not the wisdom of the assembly would annul a codicil which could not be sustained, and the regulations of which would plunge France into the greater and most troublesome misfortune. Whilst this prince spoke a profound and sad silence applauded him without explaining itself.

The Duc du Maine became of all colours, and began to speak, this time being allowed to do so. He said, that the education of the King, and consequently his person, being confided to him, as a natural result, entire authority over his civil and military household followed, without which he could not properly serve him or answer for his person. Then he vaunted his

well-known attachment to the deceased King who had put all confidence in him.

M. le Duc d'Orleans interrupted him at this word, and commented upon it. M. du Maine wished to calm him by praising the Maréchal de Villeroy, who was to assist him in his charge. M. le Duc d'Orleans replied, that it would be strange if the chief and most complete confidence were not placed in the Regent, and stranger still if he were obliged to live under the protection and authority of those who had rendered themselves the absolute masters within and without, and of Paris even, by the regiment of guards.

The dispute grew warm, broken phrases were thrown from one to the other, when troubled about the end of an altercation which became indecent, and yielding to the proposal that the Duc de la Force had just made me in front of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who sat between us, I made a sign with my hand to M. le Duc d'Orleans to go out and finish this discussion in another room leading out of the grand-chamber and where there was nobody. What led me to this action was that I perceived M. du Maine grew stronger, that confused murmurs for a division were heard, and that M. le Duc d'Orleans did not shine to the best advantage since he descended to plead his cause, so to speak, against that of the Duc du Maine.

M. le Duc d'Orleans was short-sighted. He was entirely absorbed in attacking and repelling; so that he did not see the sign I made. Some moments after I increased it, and meeting with no more success, rose, advanced some steps, and said to him, though rather

distant, "Monsieur, if you passed into the fourth chamber with M. du Maine you could speak there more easily," and advancing nearer at the same time I pressed him by a sign of the head and the eyes that he could distinguish. He replied to me with another sign, and scarcely was I re-seated, than I saw him advance in front of M. le Duc to the Duc du Maine, and immediately after both rose and went into the chamber I had indicated. I could not see who of the scattered group around followed them, for all present rose at their departure, and seated themselves again directly in complete silence. Some time after M. le Comte de Toulouse left his place and went into the chamber. M. le Duc followed him in a little while: soon again the Duc de la Force did the same.

He did not stay long. Returning to the assembly, he passed the Duc de la Rochefoucauld and me, put his head between that of the Duc de Sully and mine, because he did not wish to be heard by La Rochefoucauld, and said to me, "In the name of God go there; things are getting on badly. M. le Duc d'Orleans gives way; stop the dispute; make M. le Duc d'Orleans come back; and, as soon as he is in his place, let him say that it is too late to finish, that the company had better go to dinner, and return to finish afterwards, and during this interval," added La Force, "send the King's people to the Palais Royal, and let doubtful peers be spoken to, and the chiefs among other magistrates."

The advice appeared to me good and important. I left the assembly and went to the chamber. I found a

large circle of spectators. M. le Duc d'Orleans and the Duc du Maine stood before the fireplace, looking both very excited. I looked at this spectacle some moments; then approached the mantelpiece like a man who wishes to speak. "What is this, Monsieur?" said M. le Duc d'Orleans to me, with an impatient manner. "A pressing word, Monsieur, that I have to say to you," said I. He continued speaking to the Duc du Maine, I being close by. I redoubled my instances; he lent me his ear. "No, no," said I, "not like that, come here," and I took him into a corner by the chimney. The Comte de Toulouse, who was there, drew completely back, and all the circle on that side. The Duc du Maine drew back also from where he was.

I said to M. le Duc d'Orleans, in his ear, that he could not hope to gain anything from M. du Maine, who would not sacrifice the codicil to his reasonings; that the length of their conference became indecent, useless, dangerous; that he was making a sight of himself to all who entered; that the only thing to be done was to return to the assembly, and, when there, dissolve it. "You are right," said he, "I will do it." "But," said I, "do it immediately, and do not allow yourself to be amused. It is to M. de la Force you owe this advice: he sent me to give it you." He quitted me without another word, went to M. du Maine, told him in two words that it was too late, and that the matter must be finished after dinner.

I had remained where he left me. I saw the Duc du Maine bow to him immediately, and the two separated, and retired at the same moment into the assembly.

The noise which always accompanies these entrances being appeased, M. le Duc d'Orleans said it was too late to abuse the patience of the company any longer; that dinner must be eaten, and the work finished afterwards. He immediately added, he believed it fitting that M. le Duc should enter the council of the Regency as its chief; and that since the company had rendered the justice due to his birth and his position as Regent, he would explain what he thought upon the form to be given to the government, and that meanwhile he profited by the power he had to avail himself of the knowledge and the wisdom of the company, and restored to them from that time their former liberty of remonstrance. These words were followed by striking and general applause, and the assembly was immediately adjourned.

I was invited this day to dine with the Cardinal de Noailles, but I felt the importance of employing the time so precious and so short, of the interval of dinner, and of not quitting M. le Duc d'Orleans, according to a suggestion of M. le Duc de la Force. I approached M. le Duc d'Orleans, and said in his ear, "The moments are precious: I will follow you to the Palais Royale," and went back to my place among the peers. Jumping into my coach, I sent a gentleman with my excuses to the Cardinal de Noailles, saying, I would tell him the reason of my absence afterwards. Then I went to the Palais Royale, where curiosity had gathered together all who were not at the palace, and even some who had been there. All the acquaintances I met asked me the news with eagerness. I contented

myself with replying that everything went well, and according to rule, but that all was not yet finished.

M. le Duc d'Orleans had passed into a cabinet, where I found him alone with Canillac, who had waited for him. We took our measures there, and M. le Duc d'Orleans sent for the Attorney-General, D'Aguesseau, afterwards Chancellor, and the chief Advocate-General, Joly de Fleury, since Attorney-General. It was nearly two o'clock. A little dinner was served, of which Canillac, Conflans, M. le Duc d'Orleans, and myself partook; and I will say this, by the way, I never dined with him but once since, namely, at Bagnolet.

We returned to the parliament a little before four o'clock. I arrived there alone in my carriage, a moment before M. le Duc d'Orleans, and found everybody assembled. I was looked at with much curiosity, as it seemed to me. I am not aware if it was known whence I came. I took care that my bearing should say nothing. I simply said to the Duc de la Force that his advice had been salutary, that I had reason to hope all success from it, and that I had told M. le Duc d'Orleans whence it came. That Prince arrived, and (the hubbub inseparable from such a numerous suite being appeased), he said, that matters must be recommenced from the point where they had been broken off in the morning; that it was his duty to say to the court that in nothing had he agreed with M. du Maine, and to bring again before all eyes the monstrous clauses of a codicil, drawn from a dying prince; clauses much more strange than the dispositions of the testament that the court had not deemed fit to be put in

execution, and that the court could not allow M. du Maine to be master of the person of the King, of the camp, of Paris, consequently of the State, of the person, life, and liberty of the Regent, whom he would be in a position to arrest at any moment as soon as he became the absolute and independent master of the civil and military household of the King; that the court saw what must inevitably result from an unheard of novelty, which placed everything in the hands of M. du Maine ; and that he left it to the enlightenment, to the prudence, to the wisdom, to the equity of the company, and its love for the State, to declare what they thought on this subject.

M. du Maine appeared then as contemptible in the broad open daylight as he had appeared redoubtable in the obscurity of the cabinets. He had the look of one condemned, and his face, generally so fresh-coloured, was now as pale as death. He replied in a very low and scarcely intelligible voice, and with an air as respectful and as humble as it had been audacious in the morning.

People opined without listening to him ; and tumultuously, but with one voice, the entire abrogation of the codicil was passed. This was premature, as the abrogation of the testament had been in the morning—both caused by sudden indignation. D'Aguesseau and Fleury both spoke, the first in few words, the other at greater length, making a very good speech. As it exists in the libraries, I will only say that the conclusions of both orators were in everything favourable to M. le Duc d'Orleans.

After they had spoken, the Duc du Maine, seeing himself totally shorn, tried a last resource. He represented, with more force than could have been expected from his demeanour at this second sitting, but yet with measure, that since he had been stripped of the authority confided to him by the codicil, he asked to be discharged from the responsibility of answering for the person of the King, and to be allowed simply to preserve the superintendence of his education. M. le Duc d'Orleans replied, "With all my heart, Monsieur; nothing more is wanted." Thereupon the chief president formally put the question to the vote.

A decree was passed by which all power was taken from the hands of M. du Maine and placed in those of the Regent, with the right of placing whom he pleased in the council; of dismissing anybody as it should seem good to him; and of doing all he might think fit respecting the form to be given to the government; authority over public affairs, nevertheless, to remain with the council, and decision to be taken by the plurality of votes, the vote of the Regent to count double in case of division; M. le Duc to be chief of the council under him, with the right to enter it at once and opine there.

During all this time, and until the end of the sitting, M. du Maine had his eyes always cast down, looked more dead than alive, and appeared motionless. His son and his brother gave no sign of taking interest in anything.

The decree was followed by loud acclamations of the crowd scattered outside, and that which filled the rest

of the palace replied as soon as they learnt what had been decided.

This noise, which lasted some time, being appeased, the Regent thanked the company in brief, polished, and majestic terms; declared with what care he would employ for the good of the state, the authority with which he was invested; then said it was time he should inform them what he judged ought to be established in order to aid him in the administration of affairs. He added that he did so with the more confidence, because what he proposed was exactly what M. le Duc de Bourgogne ('twas thus he named him) had resolved, as shown by papers found in his bureau. He passed a a short and graceful eulogy upon the enlightenment and intentions of that prince; then declared that, besides the council of the Regency, which would be the supreme centre from which all the affairs of the government would spring, he proposed to establish a council for foreign affairs, one for war, one for the navy, one for finance, one for ecclesiastical matters, and one for home affairs, and to choose some of the magistrates of the company to enter these last two councils, and aid them by their knowledge upon the police of the realm, the jurisprudence, and what related to the liberties of the Gallican church.

The applause of the magistrates burst out at this, and all the crowd replied to it. The chief president concluded the sitting by a very short compliment to the Regent, who rose, and at the same time all the assembly, which then broke up.

On Friday, the 6th of September, 1715, the Regent

performed an action of most exquisite merit, if it had been actuated by the love of God, but which was of the utmost meanness, religion having no connection with it. He went at eight o'clock in the morning to see Madame de Maintenon at Saint Cyr. He was nearly an hour with this enemy, who had wished to cut off his head, and who quite recently had sought to deliver him, tied hand and foot, to M. du Maine, by the monstrous dispositions of the King's will and codicil.

The Regent assured her during this visit that the four thousand livres the King had given her every month should be continued, and should be brought to her the first day of every month by the Duc de Noailles, who had apparently induced the Prince to pay this visit, and promise this present. He said to Madame de Maintenon that if she wished for more she had only to speak, and assured her he would protect Saint Cyr. In leaving he was shown the young girls, all together, in classes.

It must be remembered, that besides the estate of Maintenon, and the other property of this famous and fatal witch, the establishment of Saint Cyr, which had more than four hundred thousand livres yearly income, and much money in reserve, was obliged by the rules which founded it, to receive Madame de Maintenon, if she wished to retire there; to obey her in all things, as the absolute and sole superior; to keep her and everybody connected with her, her domestics, her equipages, as she wished, her table, &c., at the expense of the house, all of which was very punctually done until her death. Thus she needed not this generous liberality,

by which her pension of forty-eight thousand livres was continued to her. It would have been quite enough if M. le Duc d'Orleans had forgotten that she was in existence, and had simply left her untroubled in Saint Cyr.

The Regent took good care not to inform me of his visit, before or after; and I took good care not to reproach him with it, or make him ashamed of it. It made much noise, and was not approved of. The Spanish affair was not yet forgotten, and the will and codicil furnished other matter for all conversations.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The young King's cold—Lettres de cachet revived—A melancholy story—A loan from Crosat—Retrenchments—Unpaid ambassadors—Council of the Regency—Influence of Lord Stair—The Pretender—His departure from Bar—Colonel Douglas—The pursuit—Adventure at Nonancourt — Its upshot — Madame l'Hospital — Ingratitude of the Pretender.

Saturday, the 7th of September, was the day fixed for the first Bed of Justice* of the King (Louis XV.); but he caught a cold during the night, and suffered a good deal. The Regent came alone to Paris. The Parliament had assembled, and I went to a door of the palace, where I was informed of the countermand which had just arrived. The Chief President and the King's people were at once sent for to the Palais Royale; and the Parliament, which was about to adjourn, was continued for all the rest of the month for genèral business. On the morrow, the Regent, who was wearied with Versailles,—for he liked to live in Paris, where all his pleasures were within easy reach,—and who met with opposition from the court doctors, all comfortably lodged at Versailles, to the removal of the person of the King to Vincennes, under pretext of a slight cold, fetched other doctors from Paris, who had been sent for to see the deceased King. These practitioners, who had nothing to gain by recommending Versailles,

* The name given to a grand sitting of the parliament, presided over by the King.

laughed at the court doctors, and upon their opinion it was resolved to take the King to Vincennes, where all was ready for him on the morrow.

He set out, then, that day from Versailles, at about two o'clock in the day, in company with the Regent, the Duchesse de Ventadour, the Duc du Maine, and the Maréchal de Villeroy, passed round the ramparts of Paris, without entering the city, and arrived at Vincennes about five o'clock, many people and carriages having come out along the road to see him.

On the day after the arrival of the King at Vincennes, the Regent worked all the morning, with all the secretaries of state separately, whom he had charged to bring him the list of all the *lettres de cachet* issued from their bureaux, and a statement of the reasons for which they were delivered, as such oftentimes were slight. The majority of the *lettres de cachet* of exile and of imprisonment had been drawn up against Jansenists, and people who had opposed the constitution; numbers the reasons of which were known only to the deceased King, and to those who had induced him to grant them; others were of the time of previous ministers, and among them were many which had been long forgotten and unknown. The Regent restored everybody to liberty, exiles and prisoners, except those whom he knew to have been arrested for grave crimes, or affairs of state; and brought down infinite benedictions upon himself by this act of justice and humanity.

Many very singular and strange stories were then circulated, which showed the tyranny of the last reign, and of its ministers, and caused the misfortunes of the

prisoners to be deplored. Among those in the Bastille was a man who had been imprisoned thirty-five years, arrested the day he arrived in Paris, on a journey from Italy, to which country he belonged. It has never been known why he was arrested, and he had never been examined, as was the case with the majority of the others. People were persuaded a mistake had been made. When his liberty was announced to him, he sadly asked what it was expected he could do with it? He said he had not a farthing; that he did not know a soul in Paris, not even a single street, or a person in all France; that his relatives in Italy had, doubtless, died since he left; that his property, doubtless, had been divided, so many years having elapsed during which no news had been received from him; that he knew not what to do. He asked to be allowed to remain in the Bastille for the rest of his days, with food and lodging. This was granted, with as much liberty as he wished.

As for those who were taken from the dungeons where the hatred of the ministers, of the Jesuits, and of the *Constitution* chiefs, had cast them, the horrible state they appeared in terrified everybody, and rendered credible all the cruel stories which, as soon as they were fully at liberty, they revealed.

The same day on which this merciful decision was come to, died Madame de la Vieuville, not old, of a cancer in the breast, the existence of which she had concealed until two days before her death, and thus deprived herself of help.

A few days after, the finances being in such a bad

state, the Regent made Crosat treasurer of the order, in return for which he obtained from him a loan of a million, in bars of silver, and the promise of another two million. Previous to this, the hunting establishments of the King had been much reduced. Now another retrenchment was made. There were seven intendants of the finances, who, for six hundred thousand livres, which their places had cost them, enjoyed eighty thousand livres each per annum. They were all suppressed, and simply the interest of their purchase-money paid to them; that is to say, thirty thousand livres each, until that purchase-money could be repaid. It was found that there were sixteen hundred thousand francs owing to our ambassadors, and to our agents in foreign countries, the majority of whom literally had not enough to pay the postage of their letters, having spent all they possessed. This was a cruel discredit to us, all over Europe. I might fill a volume in treating upon the state and the arrangements of our finances. But this labour is above my strength, and contrary to my taste. I will simply say that as soon as money could be spared it was sent to our ambassadors abroad. They were dying of hunger, were over head and ears in debt, had fallen into utter contempt, and our affairs were suffering accordingly.

The Council of the Regency, let me say here, was composed of the following persons: M. le Duc d'Orleans, M. le Duc, the Duc du Maine, the Comte de Toulouse, Voysin the Chancellor, myself — since I must name myself,—Maréchal de Villeroy, Maréchal d'Harcourt, Maréchal de Besons, the late Bishop of

Troyes, and Torcy, with a right to vote; with La Vrillière, who kept the register, and Pontchartrain, both without the right to vote.

I have already alluded to the presence of Lord Stair at this time in our Court, as ambassador from England. By means of intrigues he had succeeded in ingratiating himself into the favour of the Regent, and in convincing him that the interests of France and England were identical. One of the reasons—the main one—which he brought forward to show this, was that King George was an usurper; and that if anything happened to our king, M. le Duc d'Orleans would become, in mounting the throne of France, an usurper also, the King of Spain being the real heir to the French monarchy; that, in consequence of this, France and England ought to march together, protect each other; France assisting England against the Pretender, and England assisting France, if need be, against the King of Spain. M. le Duc d'Orleans had too much penetration not to see this snare; but, marvellous as it may seem, the crookedness of this policy, and not the desire of reigning, seduced him. I am quite prepared, if ever these memoirs see the day, to find that this statement will be laughed at; that it will throw discredit on others, and cause me to be regarded as a great ass, if I think to make my readers believe it; or for an idiot, if I have believed it myself. Nevertheless, such is the pure truth, to which I sacrifice all, in despite of what my readers may think of me. However incredible it may be, it is, as I say, the exact verity; and I do not hesitate to advance, that there

are many such facts, unknown to history, which would much surprise if known; and which are unknown, only because scarcely any history has been written at first hand.

Stair wished, above all, to hinder the Regent from giving any assistance to the Pretender, and to prevent him passing through the realm in order to reach a sea-port. Now the Regent was between two stools: for he had promised the Pretender to wink at his doings, and to favour his passage through France, if it were made secretly; and at the same time, he had assented to the demand of Stair. Things had arrived at this pass when the troubles increased in England, and the Earl of Marr obtained some success in Scotland. Soon after news came that the Pretender had departed from Bar, and was making his way to the coast. Thereupon Stair ran in hot haste to M. le Duc d'Orleans to ask him to keep his promise, and hinder the Pretender's journey. The Regent immediately sent off Contade, major in the guards, very intelligent, and in whom he could trust, with his brother, a lieutenant in the same regiment, and two sergeants of their choice, to go to Château-Thierry, and wait for the Pretender, Stair having sure information that he would pass there. Contade set out at night on the 9th of November, well resolved and instructed to miss the person he was to seek. Stairs, who expected as much, took also his measures, which were within an inch of succeeding; for this is what happened.

The Pretender set out disguised from Bar, accom-

panied by only three or four persons, and came to Chaillot, where M. de Lauzun had a little house, which he never visited, and which he had kept for mere fancy, although he had a house at Passy, of which he made much use. It was in this, Chaillot's house, that the Pretender put up, and where he saw the Queen, his mother, who often stopped at the Convent of the Filles de Sainte Marie Therése. Thence he set out in a post-chaise of Torcy's, by way of Alençon, for Brittany, where he meant to embark.

Stair discovered this scheme, and resolved to leave nothing undone in order to deliver his party of this, the last of the Stuarts. He quietly dispatched different people by different roads, especially by that from Paris to Alençon. He charged with this duty Colonel Douglas (who belonged to the Irish (regiments) in the pay of France), who, under the protection of his name, and by his wit and his intrigues, had insinuated himself into many places in Paris since the commencement of the Regency; had placed himself on a footing of consideration and of familiarity with the Regent; and often came to my house. He was good company; had married upon the frontier of Metz; was very poor; had politeness and much experience of the world; the reputation of distinguished valour; and nothing which could render him suspected of being capable of a crime.

Douglas got into a post-chaise, accompanied by two horsemen; all three were well armed, and posted leisurely along this road. Nonancourt is a kind of little village upon this route, at nineteen leagues from

Paris; between Dreux, three leagues further, and Verneuil au Perche, four leagues this side. It was at Nonancourt that he alighted, ate a morsel at the post-house, inquired with extreme solicitude after a post-chaise which he described, as well as the manner in which it would be accompanied, expressed fear lest it had already passed, and lest he had not been answered truly. After infinite inquiries, he left a third horseman, who had just reached him, on guard, with orders to inform him when the chaise he was in search of appeared; and added menaces and promises of recompense to the post people, so as not to be deceived by their negligence.

The post-master was named Lospital; he was absent, but his wife was in the house, and she fortunately was a very honest woman, who had wit, sense, and courage. Nonancourt is only five leagues from La Ferté, and when, to save distance, you do not pass there, they send you relays upon the road. Thus I knew very well this post-mistress, who mixed herself more in the business than her husband, and who has herself related to me this adventure more than once. She did all she could, uselessly, to obtain some explanation upon these alarms. All that she could unravel was that the strangers were Englishmen, and in a violent excitement about something,—that something very important was at stake,—and that they meditated mischief. She fancied thereupon that the Pretender was in question; resolved to save him; mentally arranged her plans, and fortunately enough executed them.

In order to succeed she devoted herself to the service of these gentlemen, refused them nothing, appeared quite satisfied, and promised that they should infallibly be informed. She persuaded them of this so thoroughly, that Douglas went away without saying where, except to this third horseman just arrived, but it was close at hand, so that he might be warned in time. He took one of his valets with him; the other remained with the horseman to wait and watch.

Another man much embarrassed the post-mistress, nevertheless she laid her plans. She proposed to the horseman to drink something, because when he arrived Douglas had left the table. She served him in her best manner, and with her best wine, and kept him at table as long as she could, anticipating all his orders. She had placed a valet, in whom she could trust, as guard, with orders simply to appear, without a word, if he saw a chaise; and her resolution was to lock up the Englishman and his servant, and to give their horses to the chaise if it came. But it came not, and the Englishman grew tired of stopping at table. Then she manœuvred so well that she persuaded him to go and lie down, and to count upon her, her people, and upon the valet Douglas had left. The Englishman told this valet not to quit the threshold of the house, and to inform him as soon as the chaise appeared. He then suffered himself to be led to the back of the house, in order to lie down. The post-mistress immediately after, goes to one of her friends in a by-street, relates her adventure and her suspicions, makes the

friend agree to receive and secrete in her dwelling the person she expected, sends for an ecclesiastic, a relative of them both, and in whom she could repose confidence, who came and lent an Abbé's dress and wig to match. This done Madame Lospital returns to her home, finds the English valet at the door, talks with him, pities his ennui, says he is a good fellow to be so particular, says that from the door to the house there is but one step, promises him that he shall be as well informed as by his own eyes, presses him to drink something, and tips the wink to a trusty postillion, who makes him drink until he rolls dead drunk under the table. During this performance, the wary mistress listens at the door of the English gentleman's room, gently turns the key and locks him in, and then establishes herself upon the threshold of her door.

Half-an-hour after comes the trusty valet whom she had put on guard: it was the expected chaise, which, as well as the three men who accompanied it, were made, without knowing why, to slacken speed. It was King James. Madame Lospital accosts him, says he is expected, and lost if he does not take care; but that he may trust in her and follow her. At once they both go to her friends. There he learns all that has happened, and they hide him, and the three men of his suite as well as they could. Madame Lospital returns home, sends for the officers of justice, and in consequence of her suspicions she causes the English gentleman and the English valet, the one drunk, the other asleep locked in the room where she had left him, to be arrested, and immediately after despatches

a postillion to Torcy. The officers of justice act, and send their deposition to the Court.

The rage of the English gentleman on finding himself arrested, and unable to execute the duty which led him there, and his fury against the valet who had allowed himself to be intoxicated, cannot be expressed. As for Madame Lospital he would have strangled her if he could; and she for a long time was afraid of her life.

The Englishman could not be induced to confess what brought him there, or where was Douglas, whom he named in order to show his importance. He declared he had been sent by the English ambassador, though Stair had not yet officially assumed that title, and exclaimed that that minister would never suffer the affront he had received. They civilly replied to him, that there were no proofs he came from the English ambassador,—none that he was connected with the minister: that very suspicious designs against public safety on the highway alone were visible; that no harm or annoyance should be caused him, but that he must remain in safety until orders came; and thereupon he was civilly led to prison, as well as the intoxicated valet.

What became of Douglas at that time was never known, except that he was recognised in various places, running, inquiring, crying out with despair that *he* had escaped, without mentioning any name. Apparently news came to him, or he sought it, being tired of receiving none. The report of what had occurred in such a little place as Nonancourt would easily have

reached him, close as he was to it; and perhaps it made him set out anew to try and catch his prey.

But he journeyed in vain. King James had remained hidden at Nonancourt, where, charmed with the attentions of his generous postmistress, who had saved him from his assassins, he admitted to her who he was, and gave her a letter for the Queen, his mother. He remained there three days to allow the hubbub to pass and rob those who sought him of all hope; then disguised as an Abbé he jumped into a post-chaise that Madame Lospital had borrowed in the neighbourhood —to confound all identity—and continued his journey, during which he was always pursued, but happily was never recognised, and embarked in Brittany for Scotland.

Douglas, tired of useless searches, returned to Paris, where Stair kicked up a fine dust about the Nonancourt adventure. This he denominated nothing less than an infraction of the law of nations, with an extreme audacity and impudence, and Douglas, who could not be ignorant of what was said about him, had the hardihood to go about everywhere as usual; to show himself at the theatre; and to present himself before M. le Duc d'Orleans.

This Prince ignored as much as he could a plot so cowardly and so barbarous, and in respect to him so insolent. He kept silence, said to Stair what he judged fitting to make him be silent likewise, but gave liberty to his English assassins. Douglas, however, fell much in the favour of the Regent, and many considerable people closed their doors to him. He vainly tried

to force mine. But as for me I was a perfect Jacobite, and quite persuaded that it was the interest of France to give England domestic occupation, which would long hinder her from thinking of foreign matters. I then, as may be supposed, could not look upon this odious enterprise with a favourable eye, or pardon its authors. Douglas complained to me of my disregard for him, but to no purpose. Soon after he disappeared from Paris. I know not what became of him afterwards. His wife and his children remained there living by charity. A long time after his death beyond the seas, the Abbé de Saint Simon passed from Noyon to Metz, where he found his widow in great misery.

The Queen of England sent for Madame Lospital to St. Germains, thanked her, caressed her, as she deserved, and gave her her portrait. This was all; the Regent gave her nothing; a long while after King James wrote to her, and sent her also his portrait. Conclusion: she remained postmistress of Nonancourt as before, twenty or twenty-five years after, to her death; and her son and her daughter-in-law keep the post now. She was a true woman; estimated in her neighbour; not a single word that she uttered concerning this history has been contradicted by anyone. What it cost her can never be said, but she never received a farthing. She never complained, but spoke as she found things, with modesty, and without seeking to speak. Such is the indigence of dethroned Kings, and their complete forgetfulness of the greatest perils and the most signal services.

Many honest people avoided Stair, whose insolent airs made others avoid him. He filled the cup by the insupportable manner in which he spoke upon that affair, never daring to admit he had directed it, or deigning to disculpate himself. The only annoyance he showed was about his ill success.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Behaviour of the Duchesse de Berry—Her arrogance checked by public opinion—Walls up the Luxembourg garden—La Muette—Her strange amour with Rion—Extraordinary details—The Duchesse at the Carmelites—Weakness of the Regent—His daily round of life—His suppers—How he squandered his time—His impenetrability—Scandal of his life—Public balls at the opera.

I MUST say a few words now of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who, as may be imagined, began to hold her head very high indeed directly the Regency of Monsieur her father, was established. Despite the representations of Madame de Saint Simon, she usurped all the honours of a queen; she went through Paris with kettle-drums beating, and all along the quay of the Tuileries where the King was. The Maréchal de Villeroy complained of this next day to M. le Duc d'Orleans, who promised him that while the King remained in Paris no kettle-drums should be heard but his. Never afterwards did Madame le Duchesse de Berry have any, yet when she went to the theatre she sat upon a raised dais in her box, had four of her guards upon the stage, and others in the pit; the house was better lighted than usual, and before the commencement of the performance she was harangued by the players. This made a strange stir in Paris, and as she did not dare to continue it she gave up her

usual place, and took at the opera a little box where she could scarcely be seen, and where she was almost incognito. As the comedy was played then upon the opera stage for Madame, this little box served for both entertainments.

The Duchesse desired apparently to pass the summer nights in all liberty in the garden of the Luxembourg. She accordingly had all the gates walled up but one, by which the Faubourg St. Germain, which had always enjoyed the privilege of walking there, were much deprived. M. le Duc thereupon opened the Conti garden to make up to the public for their loss. As may be imagined strange things were said about the motives which led to the walling up of the garden.

As the Princesse found new lovers to replace the old ones, she tried to pension off the latter at the expense of the public. She had a place created expressly for La Haye. She bought, or rather the King for her, a little house at the entry of the Bois de Boulogne, which was pretty, with all the wood in front, and a fine garden behind. It was called La Muette.

After many amours she had become smitten with Rion, a younger son of the house of Aydic. He was a fat, chubby, pale little fellow, who had so many pimples that he did not ill resemble an abscess. He had good teeth, but had no idea he should cause a passion which in less than no time became ungovernable, and which lasted a long while without however interfering with temporary and passing amours. He was not worth a penny, but had many brothers and sisters who had no more than he. He was a lieutenant

of dragoons, relative of Madame Pons, dame d'atours of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who sent for him to try and do something for him. Scarcely had he arrived than the passion of the Duchesse declared itself, and he became the master of the Luxembourg where she dwelt. M. de Lauzun, who was a distant relative, was delighted, and chuckled inwardly. He thought he saw a repetition of the old times, when Mademoiselle was in her glory; he vouchsafed his advice to Rion.

Rion was gentle and naturally polished and respectful, a good and honest fellow. He soon felt the power of his charms, which could only have captivated the incomprehensible and depraved fantasy of a princess. He did not abuse this power; made himself liked by everybody; but he treated Madame la Duchesse de Berry as M. de Lauzun had treated Mademoiselle. He was soon decorated with the most beautiful lace and the richest clothes covered with silver, loaded with snuff-boxes, jewels, and precious stones. He took pleasure in making the princess long after him, and be jealous; affecting to be still more jealous of her. He often made her cry. Little by little he obtained such authority over her, that she did not dare to do anything without his permission, not even the most indifferent things. If she were ready to go to the opera, he made her stay away; at other times he made her go thither in spite of herself. He made her treat well many ladies she did not like, or of whom she was jealous, and treat ill persons who pleased her, but of whom he pretended to be jealous. Even in her finery she had not the slightest liberty. He

amused himself by making her disarrange her head-dress, or change her clothes, when she was quite dressed; and that so often and so publicly, that he accustomed her at last to take over night his orders for her morning's dress and occupation, and on the morrow he would change every thing, and the Princess wept as much as she could, and more. At last she actually sent messages to him by trusty valets,—for he lived close to the Luxembourg,—several times during her toilet, to know what ribbons she should wear; the same with her gown and other things; and nearly always he made her wear what she did not wish for. If she ever dared to do the least thing without his permission, he treated her like a serving wench, and her tears lasted sometimes several days. This princess, so haughty, and so fond of showing and exercising the most unmeasured pride, disgraced herself by joining in repasts with him and obscure people; she with whom no man could lawfully eat if he were not a prince of the blood!

A Jesuit, named Père Riglet, whom she had known as a child, and whose intimacy she had always cultivated since, was admitted to these private repasts, without being ashamed thereof, and without Madame la Duchesse de Berry being embarrassed. Madame de Mouchy was the confidant of all these strange parties: she and Rion invited the guests, and chose the days. La Mouchy often reconciled the Princess to her lover, and was better treated by him than she, without her daring to take notice of it, for fear of an éclat which would have caused her to lose so dear a

lover, and a confidant so necessary. This life was public; everybody at the Luxembourg paid court to M. de Rion, who, on his side, took care to be on good terms with all the world, nay, with an air of respect that he refused, even in public, to his princess. He often gave sharp replies to her in society, which made people lower their eyes, and brought blushes to the cheek of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who, nevertheless, did not attempt to conceal her submission and passionate manners, even before others. A remarkable fact is, that in the midst of this life, she took an apartment at the Convent of the Carmelites of the Faubourg St. Germain, where she sometimes went in the afternoon, always slept there on grand religious fête days, and often remained there several days running. She took with her two ladies, rarely three, scarcely a single domestic; she ate with her ladies what the convent could supply for her table; attended the services, was some times long in prayer, and rigidly fasted on the appointed days.

Two Carmelites, of much talent, and who knew the world, were charged to receive her, and to be near her. One was very beautiful: the other had been so. They were rather young, especially the handsomer, but were very religious and holy, and performed the office entrusted to them much against their inclination. When they became more familiar, they spoke freely to the princess, and said to her that if they knew nothing of her but what they saw, they should admire her as a saint, but, elsewhere, they learnt that she led a strange life, and so public, that they

could not comprehend why she came to their convent. Madame la Duchesse de Berry laughed at this, and was not angry. Sometimes they lectured her, called people and things by their names, and exhorted her to change so scandalous a life; but it was all in vain. She lived as before, both at the Luxembourg and at the Carmelites, and caused wonderment by this surprising conduct.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry returned with usury to her father, the severity and the domination she suffered at the hands of Rion—yet this prince, in his weakness, was not less submissive to her, attentive to her, or afraid of her. He was afflicted with the public reign of Rion, and the scandal of his daughter; but he did not dare to breathe a word, or if he did (after some scene as ridiculous as it was violent, had passed between the lover and the Princess, and become public), he was treated like a negro, pouted at several days, and did not know how to make his peace.

But it is time now to speak of the public and private occupations of the Regent himself, of his conduct, his pleasure parties, and the employment of his days.

Up to five o'clock in the evening he devoted himself exclusively to public business, reception of ministers, councils, &c., never dining during the day, but taking chocolate between two and three o'clock, when every body was allowed to enter his room. After the council of the day, that is to say, at about five o'clock, there was no more talk of business. It was now the time of the Opera or the Luxembourg (if he had not

been to the latter place before his chocolate), or he went to Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans' apartments, or supped, or went out privately, or received company privately; or, in the fine season, he went to Saint Cloud, or elsewhere out of town, now supping there, or at the Luxembourg, or at home. When Madame was at Paris, he spoke to her for a moment before his mass; and when she was at St. Cloud he went to see her there, and always paid her much attention and respect.

His suppers were always in very strange company. His mistresses, sometimes an opera girl, often Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and a dozen men whom he called his *Roués*, formed the party. The requisite cheer was prepared in places made expressly, on the same floor; all the utensils were of silver; the company often lent a hand to the cooks. It was at these parties that the character of every one was passed in review, ministers and favourites like the rest, with a liberty which was unbridled license. The gallantries past and present of the Court and of the town; all old stories, disputes, jokes, absurdities were raked up; nobody was spared, M. le Duc d'Orleans had his say like the rest; but very rarely did these discourses make the slightest impression upon him. The company drank as much as they could, inflamed themselves, said the filthiest things without stint, uttered impieties with emulation, and when they had made a good deal of noise and were very drunk, they went to bed to recommence the same game the next day. From the moment when supper was ready, business

no matter of what importance, no matter whether private or national, was entirely banished from view. Until the next morning everybody and everything were compelled to wait.

The Regent lost then an infinite amount of time in private, in amusements, and debauchery. He lost much also in audiences too long, too extended, too easily granted, and drowned himself in those same details which during the life-time of the late King we had both so often reproached him with. Questions he might have decided in half an hour he prolonged, sometimes from weakness, sometimes from that miserable desire to set people at loggerheads, and that poisonous maxim which occasionally escaped him or his favourite, *divide et impera;* often from his general mistrust of everybody and everything; nothings become hydras with which he himself afterwards was much embarrassed. His familiarity and his readiness of access extremely pleased people, but were much abused. Folks sometimes were even wanting in respect to him, which at last was an inconvenience all the more dangerous because he could not, when he wished, reprimand those who embarrassed him; insomuch as they themselves did not feel embarrassed.

What is extraordinary is, neither his mistress nor Madame la Duchesse de Berry, nor his *Roués*, could ever draw anything from him, even when drunk, concerning the affairs of the government, however important. He publicly lived with Madame de Parabère; he lived at the same time with others; he amused himself with the jealousy and vexation of these women;

he was not the less on good terms with them all; and the scandal of this public seraglio, and that of the daily filthiness and impiety at his suppers, were extreme and spread everywhere.

Towards the end of the year (1715) the Chevalier de Bouillon, who since the death of the son of the Comte d'Auvergne had taken the name of the Prince d'Auvergne, proposed to the Regent that there should be a public ball, masked and unmasked in the opera three times a week, people to pay upon entering and the boxes to be thrown open to those who did not care to dance. It was believed that a public ball, guarded as is the opera on days of performance, would prevent those adventures which happened so often at the little obscure balls scattered throughout Paris; and indeed close them altogether. The opera balls were established on a grand scale, and with all possible effect. The proposer of the idea had for it, six thousand livres pension; and a machine admirably invented and of easy and instantaneous application, was made to cover the orchestra, and put the stage and the pit on the same level. The misfortune was, that the opera was at the Palais Royal, and that M. le Duc d'Orleans had only one step to take to reach it after his suppers and show himself there, often in a state but little becoming. The Duc de Noailles, who strove to pay court to him, went there from the commencement so drunk that there was no indecency he did not commit.

CHAPTER XXV.

First appearance of Law—His banking project supported by the Regent—Discussed by the Regent with me—Approved by the Council and registered—My interviews with Law—His reasons for seeking my friendship—Arouet de Voltaire.

Let me speak now of another matter.

A Scotchman, I do not know of what family, a great player and combiner, who had gained much in the various countries he had been in, had come to Paris during the last days of the deceased King. His name was Law; but when he became more known, people grew so accustomed to call him *Las*, that his name of Law disappeared. He was spoken of to M. le Duc d'Orleans as a man deep in banking and commercial matters, in the movements of the precious metals, in monies and finance: the Regent, from this description, was desirous to see him. He conversed with Law some time, and was so pleased with him, that he spoke of him to Desmarets as a man from whom information was to be drawn. I recollect that the Prince spoke of him to me at the same time. Desmarets sent for Law, and was a long while with him several times; I know nothing of what passed between them or its result, except that Desmarets was pleased with Law, and formed some esteem for him.

M. le Duc d'Orleans, after that, only saw him from time to time; but after the first rush of affairs, which followed the death of the King, Law, who had formed some subaltern acquaintances at the Palais Royal, and an intimacy with the Abbé Dubois, presented himself anew before M. le Duc d'Orleans, soon after conversed with him in private, and proposed some finance plans to him. The Regent made him work with the Duc de Noailles, with Rouillé, with Amelot—this last for commercial matters. The first two were afraid of an intruder, favoured by the Regent, in their administration; so that Law was a long time tossed about, but was always backed by the Duc d'Orleans. At last, the bank project pleased that Prince so much that he wished to carry it out. He spoke in private to the heads of finance, in whom he found great opposition. He had often spoken to me of it, and I had contented myself with listening to him upon a matter I never liked, and which, consequently, I never well understood; and the carrying out of which appeared to me distant. When he had entirely formed his resolution, he summoned a financial and commercial assembly, in which Law explained the whole plan of the bank he wished to establish (this was on the 24th October, 1715). He was listened to as long as he liked to talk. Some, who saw that the Regent was almost decided, acquiesced; but the majority opposed.

Law was not disheartened. The majority were spoken to privately in very good French. Nearly the same assembly was called, in which, the Regent being present, Law again explained his project. This

time few opposed and feebly. The Duc de Noailles was obliged to give in. The bank being approved of in this manner, it had next to be proposed to the Regency Council.

M. le Duc d'Orleans took the trouble to speak in private to each member of the council, and gently to make them understand that he wished the bank to meet with no opposition. He spoke his mind to me thoroughly: therefore a reply was necessary. I said to him that I did not hide my ignorance or my disgust for all finance matters; that, nevertheless, what he had just explained to me appeared good in itself, that without any new tax, without expense, and without wronging or embarrassing anybody, money should double itself at once by means of the notes of this bank, and become transferable with the greatest facility. But along with this advantage I found two inconveniences, the first, how to govern the bank with sufficient foresight and wisdom, so as not to issue more notes than could be paid whenever presented: the second, that what is excellent in a republic or in a monarchy where the finance is entirely popular, as in England, is of pernicious use in an absolute monarchy, such as France, where the necessities of a war badly undertaken and ill-sustained, the avidity of a first minister, favourite or mistress, the luxury, the wild expenses, the prodigality of a King, might soon exhaust a bank and ruin all the holders of notes, that is to say, overthrow the realm. M. le Duc d'Orleans agreed to this; but at the same time maintained that a King would have so much interest in never meddling

or allowing minister, mistress, or favourite to meddle with the bank, that this capital inconvenience was never to be feared. Upon that we for a long time disputed without convincing each other, so that when, some few days afterwards, he proposed the bank to the Regency Council, I gave my opinion as I have just explained it, but with more force and at length: and my conclusion was to reject the bank, as a bait the most fatal, in an absolute country, while in a free country it would be a very good and very wise establishment.*

Few dared to be of this opinion: the bank passed. M. le Duc d'Orleans cast upon me some little reproaches but gentle, for having spoken at such length. I based my excuses upon my belief that by duty, honour, and conscience, I ought to speak according to my persuasion, after having well thought over the matter, and explained myself sufficiently to make my opinion well understood, and the reason I had for forming it. Immediately after, the edict was registered without difficulty at the Parliament. This assembly sometimes knew how to please the Regent with good grace in order to turn the cold shoulder to him afterwards with more efficacy.

* The part played by St. Simon on this occasion was sensible and patriotic; and at the same time showed his intimate knowledge of the real character of the monarchy he served. It is impossible better to express than he does the essential difference between the government of France and that of England, which, in finance matters, he so judiciously compares to a republic. France was a monarchy, properly so called; and whether hatred or contempt is expressed for an institution under that name, of course no reference can be intended to any mixed form, whatever theoretical objection may be entertained against it.

Sometime after, to relate all at once, M. le Duc d'Orleans wished me to see Law in order that he might explain to me his plans, and asked me to do so as a favour. I represented to him my unskilfulness in all finance matters; that Law would in vain speak a language to me of which I understood nothing, that we should both lose our time very uselessly. I tried to back out thus, as well as I could. The Regent several times reverted to the charge, and at last demanded my submission. Law came then to my house. Though there was much of the foreigner in his bearing, in his expressions, and in his accent, he expressed himself in very good terms, with much clearness and precision. He conversed with me a long while upon his bank, which, indeed, was an excellent thing in itself, but for another country rather than for France, and with a prince less easy than the Regent. Law had no other solutions to give me, of my two objections, than those the Regent himself had given, which did not satisfy me. But as the affair had passed and there was nothing now to do but well direct it, principally upon that did our conversation turn. I made him feel as much as I could the importance of not showing such facility, that it might be abused, with a Regent so good, so easy, so open, so surrounded. I masked as well as I could what I wished to make him understand thereupon; and I dwelt especially upon the necessity of being prepared to satisfy instantly all bearers of notes, who should demand payment: for upon this depended the credit or the overthrow of the bank. Law, on going out,

begged me to permit him to come sometimes and talk with me; we separated mutually satisfied, at which the Regent was still more so.

Law came several other times to my house, and showed much desire to grow intimate with me. I kept to civilities because finance entered not into my head, and I regarded as lost time all these conversations. Sometime after, the Regent, who spoke to me tolerably often of Law with great prepossession, said that he had to ask of me, nay to demand of me, a favour; it was, to receive a visit from Law regularly every week. I represented to him the perfect inutility of these conversations, in which I was incapable of learning anything, and still more so of enlightening Law upon subjects he possessed, and of which I knew nought. It was in vain; the Regent wished it; obedience was necessary. Law informed of this by the Regent came then to my house. He admitted to me with good grace, that it was he who had asked the Regent to ask me, not daring to do so himself. Many compliments followed on both sides, and we agreed that he should come to my house every Tuesday morning about ten o'clock, and that my door should be closed to everybody while he remained. This first visit was not given to business. On the following Tuesday morning he came to keep his appointment, and punctually came until his discomfiture. An hour-and-a-half, very often two hours, was the ordinary time for our conversations. He always took care to inform me of the favour his bank was obtaining in France and foreign countries, of its products, of his views, of his conduct, of the oppo-

sition he met with from the heads of finance and the magistracy, of his reasons, and especially of his balance sheet, to convince me that he was more than prepared to face all holders of notes whatever sums they had to ask for.

I soon knew that if Law had desired these regular visits at my house, it was not because he expected to make me a skilful financier; but because, like a man of sense—and he had a good deal,—he wished to draw near a servitor of the Regent who had the best post in his confidence, and who long since had been in a position to speak to him of everything and of everybody with the greatest freedom and the most complete liberty; to try by this frequent intercourse to gain my friendship; inform himself by me of the intrinsic qualities of those of whom he only saw the outside; and by degrees to come to the Council, through me, to represent the annoyances he experienced, the people with whom he had to do; and lastly, to profit by my dislike to the Duc de Noailles, who, whilst embracing him every day, was dying of jealousy and vexation, and raised in his path, under-hand, all the obstacles and embarrassments possible, and would have liked to stifle him. The bank being in action and flourishing, I believed it my duty to sustain it. I lent myself, therefore, to the instructions Law proposed, and soon we spoke to each other with a confidence I never have had reason to repent. I will not enter into the details of this bank, the other schemes which followed it, or the operations made in consequence. This subject of finance would fill several volumes. I will speak of it

only as it affects the history of the time, or what concerns me in particular. It is the history of my time I have wished to write; I should have been too much turned from it had I entered into the immense details respecting finance. I might add here what Law was. I defer it to a time when this curiosity will be more in place.

Arouet, son of a notary, who was employed by my father and me until his death, was exiled and sent to Tulle at this time (the early part of 1716), for some verses very satirical and very impudent. I should not amuse myself by writing down such a trifle, if this same Arouet, having become a great poet and academician under the name of Voltaire, had not also become—after many tragical adventures—a manner of personage in the republic of letters, and even achieved a sort of importance among certain people.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Rise of Alberoni—Intimacy of France and England—Gibraltar proposed to be given up—Louville the agent—His departure—Arrives at Madrid—Alarm of Alberoni—His audacious intrigues—Louville in the bath—His attempts to see the King—Defeated—Driven out of Spain—Impudence of Alberoni—Treaty between France and England—Stipulation with reference to the Pretender.

I HAVE elsewhere alluded to Alberoni, and shown what filthy baseness he stooped to in order to curry favour with the infamous Duc de Vendôme. I have also shown that he accompanied the new Queen of Spain from Parma to Madrid, after she had been married, by procuration, to Philip V. He arrived at the Court of Spain at a most opportune moment for his fortune. Madame des Ursins had just been disgraced; there was no one to take her place. Alberoni saw his opportunity, and was not slow to avail himself of it. During the journey with the new Queen, he had contrived to ingratiate himself so completely into her favour, that she was, in a measure, prepared to see only with his eyes. The King had grown so accustomed to be shut out from all the world, and to be ruled by others, that he easily adapted himself to his new chains. The Queen and Alberoni then, in a short time, had him as completely under their thumb, as he had before been under that of Madame des Ursins.

Alberoni, unscrupulous and ambitious, stopped at nothing in order to consolidate his power and pave the way for his future greatness. Having become prime minister, he kept the King as completely inaccessible to the courtiers as to the world; would allow no one to approach him whose influence he had in any way feared. He had Philip completely in his own hands by means of the Queen, and was always on his guard to keep him there.

Ever since the Regent's accession to power, an intimacy had gradually been growing up between the two governments of France and England. This was mainly owing to the intrigues of the Abbé Dubois, who had sold himself to the English Court, from which he secretly received an enormous pension. He was, therefore, devoted heart and soul, if such a despicable personage can be said to have the one or the other—to the interests of King George, and tried to serve them in every way. He had but little difficulty—comparatively speaking—in inducing M. le Duc d'Orleans to fall into his nets, and to declare himself in favour of an English alliance. Negotiations with this end in view were, in fact, set on foot, had been for some time; and about the month of September of this year (1716), assumed a more smiling face than they had yet displayed.

Both France and England, from different motives, wished to draw Spain into this alliance. The Regent, therefore, in order to further this desire, obtained from England a promise that she would give up Gibraltar to its former owners, the Spaniards. The King of

England consented to do so, but on one condition: it was, that in order not to expose himself to the cries of the party opposed to him, this arrangement should be kept profoundly secret until executed. In order that this secrecy might be secured, he stipulated that the negotiation should not in any way pass through the hands of Alberoni, or any Spanish minister, but be treated directly between the Regent and the King of Spain, through a confidential agent chosen by the former.

This confidential agent was to take a letter respecting the treaty, to the King of Spain, a letter full of insignificant trifles, and at the same time a positive order, from the King of England written and signed by his hand, to the Governor of Gibraltar, commanding him to surrender the place to the King of Spain the very moment he received this order, and to retire with his garrison, &c., to Tangiers. In order to execute this, a Spanish general was suddenly to march to Gibraltar, under pretence of repressing the incursions of its garrison,—summon the Governor to appear, deliver to him the King of England's order, and enter into possession of the place. All this was very weakly contrived; but this concerned the King of England, not us.

I must not be proud; and must admit that I knew nothing of all this, save at second-hand. If I had, without pretending to be very clever, I must say that I should have mistrusted this fine scheme. The King of England could not be ignorant with what care and with what jealousy the Queen and Alberoni, kept the

King of Spain locked up, inaccessible to everybody—and that the certain way to fail, was to try to speak to him without their knowledge, in spite of them, or, unaided by them. However, my opinion upon this point was not asked, and accordingly was not given.

Louville was the secret agent whom the Regent determined to send. He had already been in Spain, had gained the confidence of the King, and knew him better than any other person who could have been chosen. Precisely because of all these reasons, I thought him the most unfit person to be charged with this commission. The more intimate he had been with the King of Spain, the more firm in his confidence, the more would he be feared by the Queen and Alberoni; and the more would they do to cover his embassy with failure, so as to guard their credit and their authority. I represented my views on this subject to Louville, who acknowledged there was truth in them, but contented himself with saying, that he had not in his surprise dared to refuse the mission offered to him; and that if he succeeded in it, the restitution to Spain of such an important place as Gibraltar, would doubtless be the means of securing to him large arrears of pensions due to him from Philip the First: an object of no small importance in his eyes. Louville therefore, in due time departed to Madrid, on his strange and secret embassy.

Upon arriving he went straight to the house of the Duc de Saint-Aignan, our ambassador, and took up his quarters there. Saint-Aignan who had received not the slightest information of his arriving, was surprised

beyond measure at it. Alberoni was something more than surprised. As fortune would have it, Louville when at some distance from Madrid was seen by a courier, who straightway told Alberoni of the circumstance. As may be imagined, tormented as Alberoni was by jealousy and suspicion, this caused him infinite alarm. He was quite aware who Louville was; the credit he had attained with the King of Spain; the trouble Madame des Ursins and the deceased Queen had had to get him out of their way; the fear therefore that he conceived on account of this unexpected arrival, was so great that he passed all bounds, in order to free himself from it.

He instantly despatched a courier to meet Louville with an order prohibiting him to approach any nearer to Madrid. The courier missed Louville, but a quarter of an hour after this latter had alighted at Saint-Aignan's, he received a note from Grimaldo enclosing an order from the King of Spain, commanding him to leave the city that instant! Louville replied that he was charged with a confidential letter from the King of France, and with another from M. le Duc d'Orleans, for the King of Spain; and with a commission for his Catholic Majesty which would not permit him to leave until he had executed it. In consequence of this reply, a courier was at once dispatched to the Prince de Cellamare, Spanish ambassador at Paris, ordering him to ask for the recal of Louville, and to declare that the King of Spain so disliked his person that he would neither see him, nor allow him to treat with any of the ministers!

Meanwhile the fatigue of the journey followed by such a reception, so affected Louville, that during the night he had an attack of a disease to which he was subject, so that he had a bath prepared for him, into which he got towards the end of the morning.

Alberoni not satisfied with what he had already done, came himself to the Duc de Saint-Aignan's, in order to persuade Louville to depart at once. Despite the representations made to him, he insisted upon penetrating to the sick chamber. There he saw Louville in his bath. Nothing could be more civil than the words of Alberoni, but nothing could be more dry, more negative, or more absolute than their signification. He pitied the other's illness, and the fatigue of his journey; would have wished to have known of this journey beforehand, so as to have prevented it; and had hoped to be able to overcome the repugnance of the King of Spain to see him, or at least to obtain permission for him to remain some days in Madrid. He added that he had been unable to shake his Majesty in any way, or to avoid obeying the very express order he had received from him, to see that he (Louville) departed at once.

Louville, however, was in a condition which rendered his departure impossible. Alberoni admitted this, but warned him, that his stay must only last as long as his illness, and that the attack once over, he must away. Louville insisted upon the confidential letters, of which he was the bearer, and which gave him an official character, instructed as he was to execute an important commission from the King of France, nephew of the

King of Spain, such as his Majesty could not refuse to hear direct from his mouth, and such as he would regret not having listened to. The dispute was long and warm despite the illness of Louville, who could gain nothing. He did not fail to remain five or six days with the Duc de Saint-Aignan, and to make him act as ambassador in order to obtain an audience of the King, although Saint-Aignan was hurt at being kept ignorant of the object of the other's mission.

Louville did not dare to call upon a soul for fear of committing himself, and nobody dared to call upon him. He hazarded, however, for curiosity, to go and see the King of Spain pass through a street, and ascertain if on espying him he would not be tempted to hear him, in case his arrival, as was very possible, had been kept a secret. But Alberoni had anticipated everything. Louville saw the King pass, certainly, but found it was impossible to make himself perceived by his Majesty. Grimaldo came afterwards to intimate to Louville an absolute order to depart, and to inform the Duc de Saint-Aignan that the King of Spain was so angry with the obstinacy of this delay, that he would not say what might happen if the stay of Louville was protracted; but that he feared the respect due to a representative minister, and above all an ambassador of France, would be disregarded.

Both Louville and Saint-Aignan clearly saw that all audience was impossible, and that in consequence a longer stay could only lead to disturbances which might embroil the two crowns; so that, at the end of seven or eight days, Louville departed, returning as he

came. Alberoni began then to breathe again after the extreme fear he had had. He was consoled by this proof of his power, which showed he need no longer fear that any one could approach the King without his aid, or that any business could be conducted without him. Thus Spain lost Gibraltar, and she has never been able to recover it since.

Such is the utility of prime ministers!

Alberoni spread the report in Spain and in France, that Philip V. had taken a mortal aversion against Louville, since he had driven him out of the country for his insolence and his scheming; that he would never see him, and was offended because he had passed the Pyrenees; that Louville had no proposition to make, or commission to execute; that he had deceived the Regent, in making him believe that if once he found a pretext for appearing before the King of Spain, knowing him so well as he did, that prince would be ravished by the memory of his former affection, would reinstate him in his former credit, and thus France would be able to make Spain do all she wished. In a word Alberoni declared, that Louville had only come into the country to try and obtain some of the pensions he had been promised on quitting the King of Spain, but that he had not gone the right way to work to be so soon paid.

Nothing short of the effrontery of Alberoni would have been enough for the purpose of spreading these impostures. No one had forgotten in Spain what Madame des Ursins had done to get rid of Louville,—how the King of Spain had resisted; that she was not

able to succeed without the aid of France, and her intrigues with Madame de Maintenon; and that the King, afflicted to the utmost, yielding to the orders given by France to Louville, had doubled the pensions which had for a long time been payed to him, given him a sum of money in addition, and the government of Courtray, which he lost only by the misfortune of the war that followed the loss of the battle of Ramillies. With respect to the commission, to deny it was an extreme piece of impudence, a man being concerned so well known as Louville, who descends at the house of the ambassador of France, says he has letters of trust from the King and the Regent, and an important mission which he can only confide to the King of Spain, the self-same ambassador striving to obtain an audience for him. Nothing was so easy as to cover Louville with confusion, if he had spoken falsely, by making him show his letters; if he had none he would have been struck dumb, and having no official character Alberoni would have been free to punish him. Even if with confidential letters, he had only a complaint to utter in order to introduce himself and to solicit his pay, Alberoni would very easily have been able to dishonour him, because he had no commission after having roundly asserted that he was charged with one of great importance. But omnipotence says and does with impunity whatever it pleases.

Louville having returned, it was necessary to send word to the King of England of all he had done in Spain; and this business came to nothing, except that it set Alberoni against the Regent for trying to execute

a secret commission without his knowledge; and that it set the Regent against Alberoni for frustrating a project so openly, and for showing the full force of his power. Neither of the two ever forgot this matter; and the dislike of Alberoni to the Regent led, as will be seen, to some strange results.

I will add here, that the treaty of alliance between France and England was signed a short time after this event. I did my utmost to prevent it, representing to the Regent that his best policy was to favour the cause of the Pretender, and thus by keeping the attention of Great Britain continually fixed upon her domestic concerns, he would effectually prevent her from influencing the affairs of the continent. Many and long were the conversations I had with him, insisting upon this point. But although while he was with me, my arguments might appear to have some weight with him, they were forgotten, clean swept from his mind, directly the Abbé Dubois, who had begun to obtain a most complete and pernicious influence over him, brought his persuasiveness to bear. Dubois' palm had been so well greased by the English that he was afraid of nothing. He succeeded then in inducing the Regent to sign a treaty with England, in every way, it may safely be said, advantageous to that power, and in no way advantageous to France. Amongst other conditions, the Regent agreed to send the so-called Pretender out of the realm, and to force him to seek an asylum in Italy. This was, in fact, executed to the letter. King James, who for some time had retired to Avignon, crossed the Alps and settled in Rome, where

he lived ever afterwards. I could not but deplore the adoption of a policy so contrary to the true interests of France; but the business being done I held my peace, and let matters take their course. It was the only course of conduct open to me.*

* St. Simon does not shine as a statesman in this chapter. He actually admits that had he been in power, his policy would have been to perpetuate war with England, without any cause of quarrel, but merely in order to prevent the increase of our strength. He belonged to the old-world set of politicians, which I imagine is not yet extinct.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The lieutenant of police—Jealousy of Parliament—Arrest of Pomereu resolved on—His imprisonment and sudden release—Proposed destruction of Marly—How I prevented it—Sale of the furniture—I obtain the *grandes entrées*—Their importance and nature—Afterwards lavished indiscriminately—Adventure of the diamond called "The Regent"—Bought for the crown of France.

I HAVE already shown in these memoirs, that the late King had made of the lieutenant of police a species of secret and confidential minister; a sort of inquisitor, with important powers that brought him in constant relation with the King. The Regent, with less authority than the deceased monarch, and with more reasons than he to be well-informed of everything passing, intrigues included, found occupying this office of lieutenant of police, Argenson, who had gained his good graces chiefly, I fancy, when the affair of the cordelier was on the carpet, as shown in its place. Argenson, who had much intelligence, and who had desired this post as the entry, the basis, and the road of his fortune, filled it in a very superior manner, and the Regent made use of him with much liberty. The parliament, very ready to show the extent of its authority everywhere, at the least as though in competition with that of the Regent, suffered impatiently what it called the encroachments of the Court. It wished to indem-

nify itself for the silence it had been compelled to keep thereon under the last reign, and to re-obtain at the expense of the Regent all it had lost of its authority over the police, of which it is the head. The lieutenant of police is answerable to this body—even receives his orders from it, and its reprimands (in public audiences, standing uncovered at the bar of the parliament) from the mouth of the chief president, or of him who presides, and who calls him neither Master nor Monsieur, but nakedly by his name, although the lieutenant of police might have claimed these titles, being then councillor of state.

The parliament wished, then, to humiliate Argenson (whom it hated during the time of the deceased king); to give a disagreeable lesson to the Regent; to prepare worse treatment still for his lieutenant of police; to make parade of its power; to terrify thus the public, and arrogate to itself the right of limiting the authority of the Regent.

Argenson had often during the late reign, and sometimes since, made use of an intelligent and clever fellow, just suited to him, and named Pomereu, to make discoveries, arrest people, and occasionally keep them a short time in his own house. The Parliament believed, and rightly, that in arresting this man under other pretexts, it would find the thread of many curious and secret tortuosities, which would aid its design, and that it might plume itself upon protecting the public safety against the tyranny of secret arrests and private imprisonments. To carry out its aim it made use of the Chamber of Justice, so as to appear as little as possible

in the matter. This Chamber hastened on so well the proceedings, for fear of being stopped on the road, that the first hint people had of them was on learning that Pomereu was, by decree of this Chamber, in the prisons of the Conciergerie, which are those of the parliament. Argenson, who was informed of this imprisonment immediately it took place, instantly went to the Regent, who that very moment sent a *lettre de cachet,* ordering Pomereu to be taken from prison by force if the gaoler made the slightest difficulty in giving him up to the bearers of the *lettre de cachet;* but that gentleman did not dare to make any. The execution was so prompt that this man was not an hour in prison, and they who had sent him there had not time to seize upon a box of papers which had been transported with him to the Conciergerie, and which was very carefully carried away with him. At the same time, everything in any way bearing upon Pomereu, or upon the things in which he had been employed, was carefully removed and secreted.

The vexation of the Parliament upon seeing its prey, which it had reckoned upon making such a grand use of, carried off before its eyes, may be imagined. It left nothing undone in order to move the public by its complaints and by its cries against such an attack upon law. The Chamber of Justice sent a deputation to the Regent, who made fun of it, by gravely giving permission to the deputies to retake their prisoner, but without saying a single word to them upon his escape from gaol. He was in Paris, in a place where he feared nobody. The Chamber of Justice felt the

derisiveness of the Regent's permission, and ceased to transact business. It thought to embarrass the Regent thus, but 'twould have been at its own expense. This lasted only a day or two. The Duc de Noailles spoke to the Chamber; the members felt they could gain nothing by their strike, and that if they were obstinate they would be dispensed with, and others found to perform their duties. They recommenced their labours then, and the parliament gained nothing by its attack, but only showed its ill-will, and at the same time its powerlessness.

I have forgotten something which, from its singularity, deserves recollection, and I will relate it now lest it should escape me again.

One afternoon as we were about to take our places at the Regency Council, the Maréchal de Villars drew me aside and asked me if I knew that Marly was going to be destroyed. I replied, "No;" indeed, I had not heard speak of it; and, I added, that I could not believe it. "You do not approve of it?" said the Maréchal. I assured him I was far from doing so. He repeated that the destruction was resolved on, that he knew it beyond all doubt, and that if I wished to hinder it, I had not a moment to lose. I replied that when we took our places I would speak to M. le Duc d'Orleans. "Immediately," quickly replied the Maréchal, "Speak to him this instant, for the order is perhaps already given."

As all the Council were already seated I went behind to M. le Duc d'Orleans, and whispered in his ear what I had just learnt without naming from whom, and

begged him, if my information was right, to suspend execution of his project until I had spoken to him, adding that I would join him at the Palais Royal after the Council. He stammered a little, as if sorry at being discovered, but nevertheless agreed to wait for me. I said so in leaving to the Maréchal de Villars, and went to the Palais Royal, where M. le Duc d'Orleans admitted the truth of the news I had heard. I said I would not ask who had given such a pernicious counsel. He tried to show it was good by pointing to the saving in keeping up that would be obtained; to the gain that would accrue from the sale of so many water-conduits and materials; to the unpleasant situation of a place to which the King would not be able to go for several years; and to the expense the King was put to in keeping up so many other beautiful houses, not one of which admitted of pulling down.

I replied to him, that these were the reasons of the guardian of a private gentleman that had been presented to him, the conduct of whom could in no way resemble that of the guardian of a King of France; that the expenses incurred in keeping up Marly were necessary, and that compared with the total of those of the King, they were but as drops in the ocean. I begged him to get rid of the idea, that the sale of the materials would yield any profit,—all the receipts would go in gifts and pillage, I said; and also that it was not these petty objects he ought to regard, but that he should consider how many millions had been buried in this ancient sewer, to transform it into a fairy palace, unique as to form in all Europe—unique by the beauty

of its fountains, unique also by the reputation that the deceased King had given to it; and that it was an object of curiosity to strangers of every rank who came to France; that its destruction would resound throughout Europe with censure; that these mean reasons of petty economy would not prevent all France from being indignant at seeing so distinguished an ornament swept away: that although neither he nor I might be very delicate upon what had been the taste and the favourite work of the late King, the Regent ought to avoid wounding his memory—which, by such a long reign, so many brilliant years, so many grand reverses so heroically sustained, and escaped from in so unhoped-for a manner—had left the entire world in veneration of his person: in fine, that he might reckon all the discontented, all the neutral even, would join in chorus with the ancient Court, and cry murder; that the Duc de Maine, Madame de Ventadour, the Maréchal de Villeroy would not hesitate to look upon the destruction of Marly as a crime against the King,—a crime they would not fail to make the best of for their own purposes during all the Regency, and even after it was at an end. I clearly saw that M. le Duc d'Orleans had not in the least reflected upon all this. He agreed that I was right; promised that Marly should not be touched, that it should continue to be kept up, and thanked me for preserving him from this fault.

When I was well assured of him, "Admit," said I, "that the King, in the other world, would be much astonished if he could know that the Duc de Noailles

had made you order the destruction of Marly, and that it was I who hindered it."

"Oh! as to that," he quickly replied, "it is true he could not believe it." In effect Marly was preserved and kept up; and it is the Cardinal Fleury, with his collegiate proctor's avarice, who has stripped it of its river, which was its most superb charm.

I hastened to relate this good resolve to the Maréchal de Villars. The Duc de Noailles, who for his own private reasons had wished the destruction of Marly, was furious when he saw his proposal fail. To indemnify himself in some degree for his vexation, he made the Regent agree, in the utmost secrecy for fear of another failure, that all the furniture, linen, &c., should be sold. He persuaded M. le Duc d'Orleans that all these things would be spoiled and lost by the time the King was old enough to use them; that in selling them a large sum would be gained to relieve expenses; and that in future years the King could furnish Marly as he pleased. There was an immense quantity of things sold, but owing to favour and pillage they brought very little; and to replace them afterwards millions were spent. I did not know of this sale, at which anybody bought who wished, and at very low prices, until it had commenced; therefore I was unable to hinder this very damaging parsimoniousness.

The Regent just about this time was bestowing his favours right and left with a very prodigal hand; I thought, therefore, I was fully entitled to ask him for one, which during the previous reign had been so rare, so useful, and accordingly so difficult to obtain; I mean

the right of entering the King's room—the *grandes entrées*—as it was called, and I attained it at once.

Since the occasion offers, I may as well explain what are the different sorts of *entrées*. The most precious are called the "grand," which give the right to enter into all the retired places of the King's apartments, whenever the grand chamberlain and the chief gentlemen of the chamber enter. The importance of this privilege, under a King who grants audiences with difficulty, need not be insisted on. Enjoying it, you can speak with him, tête-à-tête, whenever you please, without asking his permission, and without the knowledge of others; you obtain a familiarity, too, with him by being able to see him thus in private.

The offices which give this right are, those of grand chamberlain, of first gentleman of the chamber, and of grand master of the wardrobe on annual duty; the children, legitimate and illegitimate, of the King, and the wives and husbands of the latter enjoy the same right. As for Monsieur and M. le Duc d'Orleans they always had these *entrées*, and as sons of France, were at liberty to enter and see the King at all hours, but they did not abuse this privilege. The Duc du Maine and the Count de Toulouse had the same, which they availed themselves of unceasingly, but by the back stairs.

The second *entrées*, simpled called *entrêes*, were purely personal; no appointment or change gave them. They conferred the right to see the King at his rising, after the *grandes*, and also to see him, but under difficulties, during all the day and evening.

The last *entrées*, are those called chamber entrées.

They also give the right to see the King at his rising, before the distinguished courtiers; but no other privilege except to be present at the *booting* of the King. This was the name employed when the King changed his coat, in going or returning from hunting or a walk. At Marly, all who were staying there by invitation, entered to see this ceremony without asking; elsewhere, those who had not the *entrée* were excluded. The first gentleman of the chamber had the right, and used it sometimes, to admit four or five persons at the most, to the "booting," if they asked, and provided they were people of quality, or of some distinction.

Lastly, there were the entreés of the cabinet which gave you the right to wait for the King there when he entered after rising, until he had given orders for the day, and to pay your court to him, and to enter there when he entered to change his coat. Beyond this the privilege attached to these admissions did not extend. The cardinals and the princes of the blood had the entrées of the chamber and those of the cabinet, so had all the chief officials.

I was the first who had the *grandes entrées* from the Regent. D'Antin asked for them next. Soon after upon this example they were accorded to d'O. M. le Prince de Conti, the sole prince of the blood who had them not, because he was the sole prince of the blood who did not come from Madame de Montespan, received them next, and little by little the privilege was completely prostituted as so many others were.

By extremely rare good fortune a servant employed in the diamond mines of the great Mogul found means

to secrete about his person a diamond of prodigious size, and what is more marvellous, to gain the sea-shore and embark without being subjected to the rigid and not very delicate ordeal, that all persons not above suspicion by their name or their occupation, are compelled to submit to, ere leaving the country. He played his cards so well, apparently, that he was not suspected of having been near the mines, or of having had anything to do with the jewel trade. To complete his good fortune he safely arrived in Europe with his diamond. He showed it to several princes, none of whom were rich enough to buy, and carried it at last to England, where the King admired it, but could not resolve to purchase it. A model of it in crystal was made in England, and the man, the diamond, and the model (perfectly resembling the original) were introduced to Law, who proposed to the Regent that he should purchase the jewel for the King. The price dismayed the Regent, who refused to buy.

Law, who had in many things much grandeur of sentiment, came dispirited to me, bringing the model. I thought, with him, that it was not consistent with the greatness of a King of France to be repelled from the purchase of an inestimable jewel, unique of its kind in the world, by the mere consideration of price, and that the greater the number of potentates who had not dared to think of it, the greater ought to be his care not to let it escape him. Law, ravished to find me think in this manner, begged me to speak to M. le Duc d'Orleans. The state of the finances was an obstacle upon which the Regent much insisted. He

feared blame for making so considerable a purchase, while the most pressing necessities could only be provided for with much trouble, and so many people were of necessity kept in distress. I praised this sentiment, but I said that he ought not to regard the greatest King of Europe as he would a private gentleman, who would be very reprehensible if he threw away 100,000 livres upon a fine diamond, while he owed many debts which he could not pay: that he must consider the honour of the crown, and not lose the occasion of obtaining a priceless diamond which would efface the lustre of all others in Europe: that it was a glory for his Regency which would last for ever; that whatever might be the state of the finances the saving obtained by a refusal of the jewel would not much relieve them, for it would be scarcely perceptible; in fact I did not quit M. le Duc d'Orleans until he had promised that the diamond should be bought.

Law before speaking to me had so strongly represented to the dealer the impossibility of selling his diamond at the price he hoped for, and the loss he would suffer in cutting it into different pieces, that at last he made him reduce the price to two millions, with the scrapings, which must necessarily be made in polishing, given in. The bargain was concluded on these terms. The interest upon the two millions was paid to the dealer until the principal could be given to him, and in the meanwhile two millions' worth of jewels were handed to him as security.

M. le Duc d'Orleans was agreeably deceived by the applause that the public gave to an acquisition so

beautiful and so unique. This diamond was called the Regent. It is of the size of a green-gage plum, nearly round, of a thickness which corresponds with its volume, perfectly white, free from all spot, speck, or blemish, of admirable water, and weighs more than 500 grains. I much applauded myself for having induced the Regent to make so illustrious a purchase.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Death of the Duchesse de Lesdiguières — Cavoye and his wife — Peter the Great—His visit to France—Enmity to England—Its cause—Kourakin, the Russian ambassador—The Czar studies Rome—Makes himself the head of religion—New desires for Rome—Ultimately suppressed—Preparations to receive the Czar at Paris—His arrival at Dunkerque—At Beaumont—Dislikes the fine quarters provided for him—His singular manners, and those of his suite.

In 1716 the Duchesse de Lesdiguières died at Paris in her fine hotel. She was not old, but had been long a widow, and had lost her only son. She was the last relic of the Gondis who were brought into France by Catherine de' Medici, and who made so prodigious a fortune. She left great wealth. She was a sort of fairy, who, though endowed with much wit would see scarcely anybody, still less give dinners to the few people she did see. She never went to Court, and seldom went out of,her house. The door of her house was always thrown back,.disclosing a grating, through which could be perceived a true fairy palace, such as is sometimes described in romances. Inside it was nearly desert, but of consummate magnificence, and all this confirmed the first impression, assisted by the singularity of everything, her followers, her livery, the yellow hangings of her carriage, and the two great Moors who always followed her. She left much to her servants, and for pious purposes, but nothing to her

daughter-in-law, though poor and respectful to her. Others got magnificent legacies.

Cavoye died about the same time. I have said enough about him and his wife to have nothing to add. Cavoye, away from Court, was like a fish out of water; and he could not stand it long. If romances have rarely produced conduct like that of his wife towards him, they would with still greater difficulty describe the courage with which her lasting love for her husband sustained her in her attendance on his last illness, and the entombment to which she condemned herself afterwards. She preserved her first mourning all her life, never slept away from the house where he died, or went out, except to go twice a day to Saint-Sulpice to pray in the chapel where he was buried. She would never see any other persons besides those she had seen during the last moments of her husband, and occupied herself with good works also, consuming herself thus in a few years without a single sign of hesitation. A vehemence so equal and so maintained is perhaps an example, great, unique, and assuredly very respectable.

Peter I., Czar of Muscovy, has made for himself, and justly, such a great name, in his own country, in all Europe, and in Asia, that I will not undertake to describe so grand, so illustrious a prince—comparable to the greatest men of antiquity—who has been the admiration of his age, who will be that of years to come, and whom all Europe has been so much occupied in studying. The singularity of the journey into France of so extraordinary a prince, has appeared to me to deserve a complete description in an unbroken

narrative. It is for this reason that I place my account of it here a little late, according to the order of time, but with dates that will rectify this fault.

Various things relating to this monarch have been seen in their place; his various journeys to Holland, Germany, Vienna, England, and to several parts of the north; the object of those journeys, with some account of his military actions, his policy, his family. It has been shown that he wished to come into France during the time of the late King, who civilly refused to receive him. There being no longer this obstacle, he wished to satisfy his curiosity, and he informed the Regent through Prince Kourakin, his ambassador at Paris, that he was going to quit the Low Countries, and come and see the King.

There was nothing for it but to appear very pleased, although the Regent would gladly have dispensed with this visit. The expenses to be defrayed were great; the trouble would be not less great with a prince so powerful and so clear-sighted, but full of whims, with a remnant of barbarous manners, and a grand suite of people, of behaviour very different from that common in these countries, full of caprices and of strange fashions, and both they and their master very touchy and very positive upon what they claimed to be due, or, permitted to them.

Moreover the Czar was at daggers drawn with the King of England, the enmity between them passing all decent limits, and being the more bitter because personal. This troubled not a little the Regent, whose intimacy with the King of England was public, the

private interest of Dubois carrying it even to dependence. The dominant passion of the Czar was to render his territories flourishing by commerce; he had made a number of canals in order to facilitate it; there was one for which he needed the concurrence of the King of England, because it traversed a little corner of his German dominions. From jealousy George would not consent to it. Peter, engaged in the war with Poland, then in that of the North, in which George was also engaged, negotiated in vain. He was all the more irritated, because he was in no condition to employ force, and this canal, much advanced, could not be continued. Such was the source of that hatred which lasted all the lives of these monarchs, and with the utmost bitterness.

Kourakin was of a branch of that ancient family of the Jagellons, which had long worn the crowns of Poland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. He was a tall, well-made man, who felt all the grandeur of his origin; had much intelligence, knowledge of the way of managing men, and instruction. He spoke French and several languages very fairly; he had travelled much, served in war, then been employed in different courts. He was Russian to the back-bone, and his extreme avarice much damaged his talents. The Czar and he had married two sisters, and each had a son. The Czarina had been repudiated and put into a convent near Moscow; Kourakin in no way suffered from this disgrace; he perfectly knew his master, with whom he kept on very free terms, and by whom he was treated with confidence and consideration. His last

mission had been to Rome, where he remained three years; thence he came as ambassador to Paris. At Rome he was without official character, and without business except a secret one, with which the Czar had entrusted him, as to a sure and enlightened man.

This monarch, who wished to raise himself and his country from barbarism, and extend his power by conquests and treaties, had felt the necessity of marriages, in order to ally himself with the chief potentates of Europe. But to form such marriages he must be of the Catholic religion, from which the Greeks were separated by such a little distance, that he thought his project would easily be received in his dominions, if he allowed liberty of conscience there. But this prince was sufficiently sagacious to seek enlightenment beforehand upon Romish pretensions. He had sent for that purpose to Rome a man of no mark, but capable of well fulfilling his mission, who remained there five or six months, and who brought back no very satisfactory report. Later he opened his heart in Holland to King William, who dissuaded him from his design, and who counselled him even to imitate England, and to make himself the chief of his religion, without which he would never be really master in his own country. This counsel pleased the Czar all the more, because it was by the wealth and by the authority of the patriarchs of Moscow, his grand-fathers, and great-grand-fathers, that his father had attained the crown, although only of ordinary rank among the Russian nobility.

These patriarchs were dependent upon those of the Greek rite of Constantinople but very slightly. They

had obtained such great power, and such prodigious rank, that at their entry into Moscow the Czar held their stirrups, and, on foot, led their horse by the bridle. Since the grandfather of Peter there had been no patriarch at Moscow. Peter I., who had reigned some time with his elder brother, incapable of affairs, long since dead, leaving no son, had like his father never consented to have a patriarch there. The archbishops of Novgorod supplied their place in certain things, as occupying the chief see after that of Moscow, but with scarcely any authority that the Czar did not entirely usurp, and more carefully still after King William had given him the counsel before alluded to; so that by degrees he had become the real religious chief of his vast dominions.

Nevertheless, the passionate desire he had to give to his posterity the privilege of marrying with Catholic princes, the wish he had, above all, for the honour of alliances with the house of France, and that of Austria, made him return to his first project. He tried to persuade himself that the man whom he had secretly sent to Rome, had not been well informed, or had ill understood; he resolved, therefore, to fathom his doubts, so that he should no longer have any as to the course he ought to adopt.

It was with this design that he chose Prince Kourakin, whose knowledge and intelligence were known to him, and sent him to Rome under pretence of curiosity, feeling that a nobleman of his rank would find the best, the most important, and the most distinguished society there ready to receive him; and that

by remaining there, under pretext of liking the life he led, and of wishing to see and admire at his ease all the marvels of so many different kinds collected there, he should have leisure and means to return perfectly instructed upon everything he wished to know. Kourakin, in fact, remained in Rome three years, associating with the *savans* on the one hand and the best company on the other, whence by degrees he obtained all he wished to know; all the more readily because this Court boasts of its temporal pretensions and of its conquests of this kind, instead of keeping them secret. In consequence of the long and faithful report that Kourakin made to the Czar, that prince heaved a sigh, saying that he must be master in his own country, and could not place there anybody greater than himself; and never afterwards did he think of turning Catholic.

This fact respecting the Czars and Rome, Prince Kourakin did not hide. Everybody who knew him has heard him relate it. I have eaten with him and he with me, and I have talked a good deal with him, and heard him talk, with pleasure, upon many things.

The Regent, informed by him of the forthcoming arrival in France of the Czar, by sea, sent the King's equipages, horses, coaches, vehicles, wagons, and tables and chambers with du Libois, one of the King's gentlemen in ordinary, to go and wait for the Czar at Dunkerque, pay the expenses incurred by him and his suite on the way to Paris, and everywhere render him the same honour as to the King. The Czar proposed to allot a hundred days to his journey. The apart-

ment of the Queen-mother at the Louvre was furnished for him, the councils usually held there taking place in the houses of the chiefs of these councils.

M. le Duc d'Orleans discussing with me as to the nobleman best fitted to be appointed to wait upon the Czar during his stay, I recommended the Maréchal de Tessé, as a man without occupation, who well knew the language and the usages of society, who was accustomed to foreigners by his journeys and negotiations in Spain, Turin, Rome, and in other courts of Italy, and who, gentle and polite, was sure to perform his duties well. M. le Duc d'Orleans agreed with me, and the next day sent for him and gave him his orders.

When it was known that the Czar was near Dunkerque, the Regent sent the Marquis de Neelle to receive him at Calais, and accompany him until they met the Maréchal de Tessé, who was not to go beyond Beaumont to wait for him. At the same time the Hôtel de Lesdiguières was prepared for the Czar and his suite, under the idea that he might prefer a private house, with all his people around him, to the Louvre. The Hôtel de Lesdiguières was large and handsome, as I have said at the commencement of this chapter, adjoined the arsenal, and belonged by succession to the Maréchal de Villeroy, who lodged at the Tuileries. Thus the house was empty because the Duc de Villeroy, who was not a man fond of display, had found it too distant to live in. It was entirely refurnished, and very magnificently with the furniture of the King.

The Czar arrived at Beaumont on Friday, the 7th of May, 1717, about mid-day. Tessé made his reverences

to him as he descended from his coach, had the honour of dining with him, and of escorting him that very day to Paris.

The Czar entered the city in one of Tessé's coaches, with three of his suite with him, but not Tessé himself. The Maréchal followed in another coach. The Czar alighted at nine o'clock in the evening at the Louvre, and walked all through the apartments of the queen-mother. He considered them to be too magnificently hung and lighted, jumped into his coach again, and went to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, where he wished to lodge. He thought the apartment destined for him too fine also, and had his camp-bed immediately spread out in a wardrobe. The Maréchal de Tessé, who was to do the honours of his house and of his table, to accompany him everywhere, and not quit the place where he might be, lodged in an apartment of the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, and had enough to do in following and sometimes running after him. Verton, one of the King's maîtres d'hôtel, was charged with serving him and all the tables of the Czar and his suite. The suite consisted of forty persons of all sorts, twelve or fifteen of whom were considerable people in themselves, or by their appointments; they all ate with the Czar.

Verton was a clever lad, strong in certain company, fond of good cheer and of gaming, and served the Czar with so much order, and conducted himself so well, that this monarch and all the suite conceived a singular friendship for him.

The Czar excited admiration by his extreme curiosity,

always bearing upon his views of government, trade, instruction, police, and this curiosity embraced everything, disdained nothing in the smallest degree useful; it was marked, and enlightened, esteeming only what merited to be esteemed, and exhibited in a clear light the intelligence, justness, ready appreciation of his mind. Everything showed in the Czar the vast extent of his knowledge, and a sort of logical harmony of ideas. He allied in the most surprising manner the highest, the proudest, the most delicate, the most sustained and at the same time the least embarrassing majesty, when he had established it in all its safety with a marked politeness. Yet he was always and with everybody the master everywhere, but with gradations, according to the persons he was with.* He had a kind of familiarity which sprang from liberty, but he was not without a strong dash of that ancient barbarism of his country, which rendered all his actions rapid, nay, precipitous, his will uncertain, and not to be constrained or contradicted in anything. Often his table was but little decent, much less so were the attendants who served, often too with an openness of kingly audacity everywhere. What he proposed to see or do, was entirely independent of means; they were to be bent to his pleasure and command. His desire for liberty, his dislike to be made a show of, his free and easy habits, often made him prefer hired coaches, common cabs,

* This just appreciation of rank is always vaunted by St. Simon as one of the highest qualities a man can possess. No one was so contemptible to him as the person who took off his hat to the same extent to a marquis as to a duke.

even; nay, the first which he could lay his hands on, though belonging to people below him, of whom he knew nothing. He jumped in, and had himself driven all over the city, and outside it. On one occasion he seized hold of the coach of Madame de Mattignon, who had come to gape at him, drove off with it to Boulogne and other country places near Paris. The owner was much astonished to find she must journey back on foot. On such occasions the Maréchal de Tessé and his suite had often hard work to find the Czar, who had thus escaped them.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Personal appearance of the Czar—His meals—Invited by the Regent—His interview with the King—He returns the visit—Excursion in Paris—Visits Madame—Drinks beer at the Opera—At the Invalides—Meudon—Issy—The Tuileries—Versailles—Hunt at Fontainebleau—St. Cyr—Extraordinary interview with Madame de Maintenon—My meeting with the Czar at d'Antin's—The ladies crowd to see him—Interchange of presents—A review—Party visits—Desire of the Czar to be united to France.

The Czar was a very tall man, exceedingly well made; rather thin, his face somewhat round, a high forehead, good eyebrows, a rather short nose, but not too short, and large at the end, rather thick lips, complexion reddish brown, good black eyes, large, bright, piercing, and well open; his look majestic and gracious when he liked, but when otherwise, severe and stern, with a twitching of the face, not often occurring, but which appeared to contort his eyes and all his physiognomy, and was frightful to see: it lasted a moment, gave him a wild and terrible air, and passed away. All his bearing showed his intellect, his reflectiveness, and his greatness, and was not devoid of a certain grace. He wore a linen collar, a round brown wig, as though without powder, and which did not reach to his shoulders; a brown coat tight to the body, even, and with gold buttons; vest, breeches, stockings, no gloves or ruffles, the star of his order over his coat,

and the cordon under it, the coat itself being frequently quite unbuttoned, his hat upon the table, but never upon his head even out of doors. With this simplicity, ill accompanied or ill mounted as he might be, the air of greatness natural to him could not be mistaken.

What he ate and drank at his two regular meals is inconceivable, without reckoning the beer, lemonade, and other drinks he swallowed between these repasts, his suite following his example; a bottle or two of beer, as many more of wine, and, occasionally, liqueurs afterwards; at the end of the meal strong drinks, such as brandy, as much sometimes as a quart. This was about the usual quantity at each meal. His suite at his table drank more and ate in proportion, at eleven o'clock in the morning and at eight at night. There was a chaplain who ate at the table of the Czar, who consumed half as much again as the rest, and with whom the monarch, who was fond of him, much amused himself. Prince Kourakin went every day to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, but lodged elsewhere.

The Czar well understood French, and I think could have spoken it, if he had wished, but for greatness sake he always had an interpreter. Latin and many other languages he spoke very well. There was a detachment of guards in his house, but he would scarcely ever allow himself to be followed by them. He would not set foot outside the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, whatever curiosity he might feel, or give any signs of life, until he had received a visit from the King.

On Saturday, the day after his arrival, the Regent went in the morning to see the Czar. This monarch

left his cabinet, advanced a few paces, embraced Monsieur d'Orleans with an air of great superiority, pointed to the door of the cabinet, and instantly turning on his heel, without the slightest compliment, entered there. The Regent followed, and Prince Kourakin after him to serve as interpreter. They found two arm-chairs facing each other, the Czar seated himself in the upper, the Regent in the other. The conversation lasted nearly an hour without public affairs being mentioned, after which the Czar left his cabinet; the Regent followed him, made him a profound reverence, but slightly returned, and left him in the same place as he had found him on entering.

On Monday the 10th of May, the King went to see the Czar, who received him at the door, saw him alight from his coach, walked with him at his left into his chamber where they found two arm-chairs equally placed. The King sat down in the right-hand one, the Czar in the other, Prince Kourakin served as interpreter. It was astonishing to see the Czar take the King under both arms, hoist him up to his level, embrace him thus in the air; and the King, young as he was, show no fear, although he could not possibly have been prepared for such a reception. It was striking, too, to see the grace which the Czar displayed before the King, the air of tenderness he assumed towards him, the politeness which flowed as it were naturally, and which nevertheless was mixed with greatness, with equality of rank, and slightly with superiority of age: for all these things made themselves felt. He praised the King, appeared charmed

with him, and persuaded everybody he was. He embraced him again and again. The King paid his brief compliment very prettily; and M. du Maine, the Maréchal de Villeroy, and the distinguished people present, filled up the conversation. The meeting lasted a short quarter of an hour. The Czar accompanied the King as he had received him, and saw him to his coach.

On Tuesday the 11th of May, between four and five o'clock, the Czar went to see the King. He was received by the King at his carriage door, took up a position on his right, and was conducted within. All these ceremonies had been agreed on before the King went to see him. The Czar showed the same affection and the same attentions to the King as before; and his visit was not longer than the one he had received, but the crowd much surprised him.

He had been at eight o'clock in the morning to see the Place Royal, the Place des Victoires, and the Place de Vendôme, and the next day he went to the Observatoire, the Gobelins, and the King's Garden of Simples. Everywhere he amused himself in examining everything, and in asking many questions.

On Thursday the 13th of May, he took medicine, but did not refrain after dinner from calling upon several celebrated artificers. On Friday the 14th, he went at six o'clock in the morning into the grand gallery of the Louvre, to see the plans in relief of all the King's fortified places, Hasfield, with his engineers, doing the honours. The Czar examined all these plans for a long time; visited many other parts of the

Louvre, and descended afterwards into the Tuileries' garden, from which everybody had been excluded. They were working then upon the Pont Tournant. The Czar industriously examined this work, and remained there a long time. In the afternoon he went to see, at the Palais Royal, Madame, who had sent her compliments to him by her officer. The arm-chair excepted, she received him as she would have received the King. M. le Duc d'Orleans came afterwards and took him to the Opera, into his grand box, where they sat upon the front seat upon a splendid carpet. Sometime after, the Czar asked if there was no beer to be had? Immediately a large goblet of it was brought to him, on a salver. The Regent rose, took it and presented it to the Czar, who with a smile and an inclination of politeness, received the goblet without any ceremony, drank, and put it back on the salver which the Regent still held. In handing it back, the Regent took a plate, in which was a napkin, presented it to the Czar, who without rising made use of it, at which the house appeared rather astonished. At the fourth act the Czar went away to supper, but did not wish the Regent to leave the box. The next morning he jumped into a hired coach, and went to see a number of curiosities among the workmen.

On the 16th of May, Whit Sunday, he went to the Invalides, where he wished to see and examine everything. At the refectory he tasted the soldiers' soup and their wine, drank to their healths, struck them on the shoulder, and called them comrades. He much admired the church, the dispensary, and the infirmary,

and appeared much pleased with the order of the establishment. The Maréchal de Villars did the honours; the Maréchale went there to look on. The Czar was very civil to her.

On Monday, the 17th, he dined early with Prince Ragotzi, who had invited him, and afterwards went to Meudon, where he found some of the King's horses to enable him to sée the gardens and the park at his ease. Prince Ragotzi accompanied him.

On Tuesday, the 18th, the Maréchal d'Estrées took him, at eight o'clock in the morning, to his house at Issy, gave him a dinner, and much amused him during the day with many things shown to him relating to the navy.

On Monday, the 24th, he went out early to the Tuileries, before the King was up. He entered the rooms of the Maréchal de Villeroy, who showed him the crown jewels. They were more beautiful and more numerous than he suspected, but he said he was not much of a judge of such things. He stated that he cared but little for the beauties purely of wealth and imagination, above all for those he could not attain. Thence he wished to go and see the King, who spared him the trouble by coming. It had been expressly arranged thus, so that his visit should appear one of chance. They met each other in a cabinet, and remained there. The King, who held a roll of paper in his hand, gave it to him, and said it was the map of his territories. This compliment much pleased the Czar, whose politeness, and friendly affectionate bearing was the same as before, with much grace and majesty.

In the afternoon he went to Versailles, where the Maréchal de Tessé left him to the Duc d'Antin. The apartment of Madame la Dauphine was prepared for him, and he slept in the room of Monseigneur le Dauphin (the King's father), now made into a cabinet for the Queen.

On Tuesday, the 25th, he had traversed the gardens, and had been upon the canal early in the morning, before the hour of his appointment with D'Antin. He saw all Versailles, Trianon, and the ménagerie. His principal suite was lodged at the château. They took ladies with them, and slept in the apartments Madame de Maintenon had occupied, quite close to that in which the Czar slept. Bloin, governor of Versailles, was extremely scandalised to see this temple of prudery thus profaned. Its goddess and he formerly would have been less shocked. The Czar and his people were not accustomed to restraint.

The expenses of this Prince amounted to six hundred crowns a-day, though he had much diminished his table since the commencement.

On Sunday, the 30th of May, he set out with Bellegarde, and many relays, to dine at Petit Bourg, with D'Antin, who received him there, and took him in the afternoon to see Fontainebleau, where he slept, and the morrow there was a stag-hunt, at which the Comte de Toulouse did the honours. Fontainebleau did not much please the Czar, and the hunt did not please him at all; for he nearly fell off his horse, not being accustomed to this exercise, and finding it too violent. When he returned to Petit Bourg, the appearance of

his carriage showed that he had eaten and drunk a good deal in it.

On Friday, the 11th of June, he went from Versailles to Saint Cyr, where he saw all the household, and the girls in their classes. He was received there like the King. He wished to see Madame de Maintenon, who, expecting his curiosity, had buried herself in her bed, all the curtains closed, except one, which was half-open. The Czar entered her chamber, pulled back the window-curtains upon arriving, then the bed-curtains, took a good long stare at her, said not a word to her,—nor did she open her lips,—and, without making her any kind of reverence, went his way. I knew afterwards that she was much astonished, and still more mortified at this; but the King was no more. The Czar returned on Saturday, the 12th of June, to Paris.

On Tuesday, the 15th of June, he went early to D'Antin's Paris house. Working this day with M. le Duc d'Orleans, I finished in half-an-hour; he was surprised, and wished to detain me. I said, I could always have the honour of finding him, but not the Czar, who was going away; that I had not yet seen him, and was going to D'Antin's to stare at my ease. Nobody entered except those invited, and some ladies with Madame la Duchesse and the princesses, her daughters, who wished to stare also. I entered the garden, where the Czar was walking. The Maréchal de Tessé, seeing me at a distance, came up, wishing to present me to the Czar. I begged him to do nothing of the kind, not even to perceive me, but to let me gape at my ease, which I could not do if made known. I

begged him also to tell this to D'Antin, and with these precautions I was enabled to satisfy my curiosity without interruption. I found that the Czar conversed tolerably freely, but always as the master everywhere. He retired into a cabinet, where D'Antin showed him various plans and several curiosities, upon which he asked several questions. It was there I saw that convulsion which I have noticed. I asked Tessé if it often happened; he replied, "several times a-day, especially when he is not on his guard to prevent it." Returning afterwards into the garden, D'Antin made the Czar pass through the lower apartments, and informed him that Madame la Duchesse was there with some ladies, who had a great desire to see him. He made no reply, but allowed himself to be conducted. He walked more gently, turned his head towards the apartment where all the ladies were under arms to receive him; looked well at them all, made a slight inclination of the head to the whole company at once, and passed on haughtily. I think, by the manner in which he received other ladies, that he would have shown more politeness to these if Madame la Duchesse had not been there, making her visit too pretentious. He affected even not to inquire which she was, or to ask the name of any of the others. I was nearly an hour without quitting him, and unceasingly regarding him At last I saw he remarked it. This rendered me more discreet, lest he should ask who I was. As he was returning, I walked away to the room where the table was laid. D'Antin, always the same, had found means to have a very good portrait of the Czarine placed

upon the chimney-piece of this room, with verses in her praise, which much pleased and surprised the Czar. He and his suite thought the portrait very like.

The King gave the Czar two magnificent pieces of Gobelins tapestry. He wished to give him also a beautiful sword, ornamented with diamonds, but he excused himself from accepting it. The Czar, on his side, distributed 60,000 livres to the King's domestics, who had waited upon him; gave to D'Antin, Maréchal d'Estrées, and Maréchal Tessé, his portrait, adorned with diamonds, and five gold and eleven silver medals, representing the principal actions of his life. He made a friendly present to Verton, whom he begged the Regent to send to him as chargé d'affaires of the King, which the Regent promised.

On Wednesday, the 16th of June, he attended on horseback a review of the two regiments of the guards, gendarmes, light horse, and mousquetaires. There was only M. le Duc d'Orleans with him; the Czar scarcely looked at these troops, and they perceived it. He partook of a dinner-supper at Saint Ouen, at the Duc de Tresmes', where he said that the excessive heat and dust, together with the crowd on horseback and on foot, had made him quit the review sooner than he wished. The meal was magnificent; the Czar learnt that the Marquise de Bethune, who was looking on, was the daughter of the Duc de Tresmes; he begged her to sit at table; she was the only lady who did so, among a crowd of noblemen. Several other ladies came to look on, and to these he was very civil when he knew who they were.

On Thursday, the 17th, he went for the second time to the Observatoire, and there supped with the Maréchal de Villars.

On Friday, the 18th of June, the Regent went early to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, to say adieu to the Czar, remaining some time with him, with Prince Kourakin present. After this visit the Czar went to say good-bye to the King at the Tuileries. It had been agreed that there should be no more ceremonies between them. It was impossible to display more intelligence, grace, and tenderness towards the King than the Czar displayed on all these occasions; and again on the morrow, when the King came to the Hôtel de Lesdiguières to wish him a pleasant journey, no ceremony being observed.

On Sunday, the 20th of June, the Czar departed, and slept at Ivry, bound straight for Spa, where he was expected by the Czarine. He would be accompanied by nobody, not even on leaving Paris. The luxury he remarked much surprised him; he was moved in speaking upon the King and upon France, saying, he saw with sorrow that this luxury would soon ruin the country. He departed, charmed by the manner in which he had been received, by all he had seen, by the liberty that had been left to him, and extremely desirous to closely unite himself with the King; but the interests of the Abbé Dubois, and of England, were obstacles which have been much deplored since.

The Czar had an extreme desire to unite himself to France. Nothing would have been more advantageous to our commerce, to our importance in the north, in

Germany, in all Europe. The Czar kept England in restraint as to her commerce, and King George in fear for his German states. He kept Holland respectful, and the Emperor measured. It cannot be denied that he made a grand figure in Europe and in Asia, or that France would not have infinitely profited by close union with him. He did not like the Emperor; he wished to sever us from England, and it was England which rendered us deaf to his invitations, unbecomingly so, though they lasted after his departure. Often I vainly pressed the Regent upon this subject, and gave him reasons of which he felt all the force, and to which he could not reply. He was bewitched by Dubois, who panted to become Cardinal, and who built all his hopes of success upon England. The English saw his ambition, and took advantage of it for their own interests. Dubois's aim was to make use of the intimacy between the King of England and the Emperor, in order that the latter might be induced by the former to obtain a Cardinalship from the Pope, over whom he had great power. It will be seen, in due time, what success has attended the intrigues of the scheming and unscrupulous Abbé.

END OF VOL. III.

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